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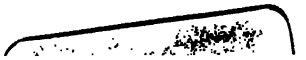

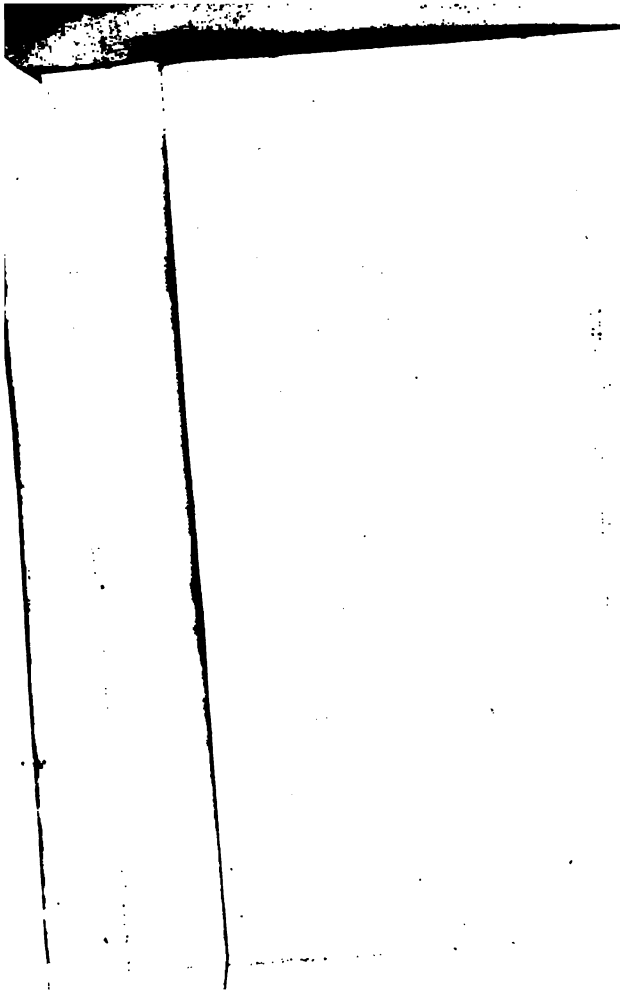

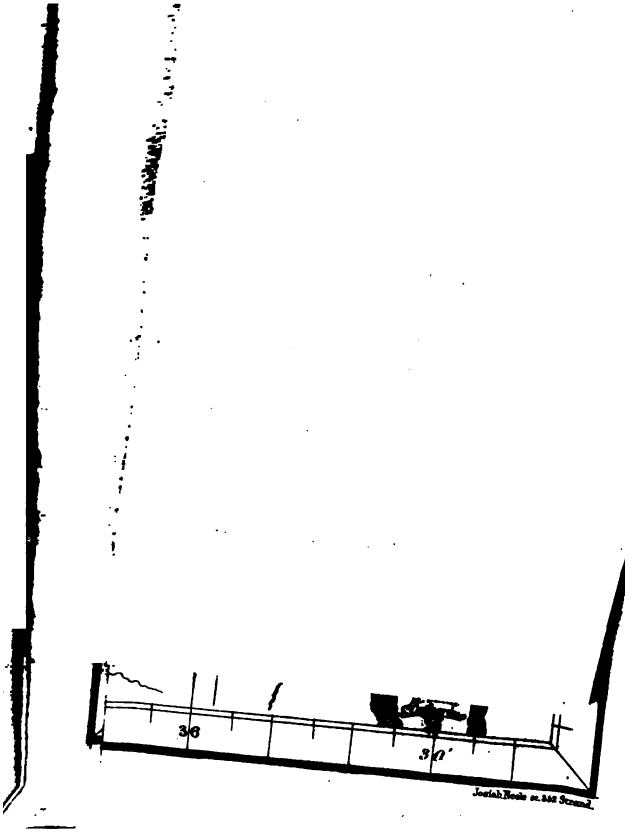
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MANUAL

OF

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COMPILED FROM THE MOST EMINENT DIVINES OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

VOL. I.

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO

THE BIBLE.

THE Bible is the only authentic source from which we can derive instruction concerning the various dispensations of God to mankind, and the duties required of men by their Creator. The word "Bible" literally signifies book; and the word "Scriptures," writings: but these words are now, by way of eminence and distinction, applied exclusively to those sacred compositions, which contain the revealed will of God. The words "Scriptures" and "Scripture" occur in this sense in the Gospels, Acts, and Epistles; whence it is evident, that, in the time of our Saviour, they denoted the books received by the Jews as the rule of their faith. To these books have been added the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists, which complete the

collection of books, acknowledged by Christians to be divinely inspired. The Bible, or the Book, the book of books, was used in its present sense by the early Christians, as we learn from St. Chrysostom.

The Bible is divided into two parts, the Old and the New Testament. The Apostle St. Paul, at 2 Cor. iii. 6 and 14, calls the dispensation of Moses "the Old Testament," and the dispensation of Christ "the New Testament;" and these distinguishing appellations were applied by the early ecclesiastical authors to the writings which contain these dispensations. The Greek word, translated "testament," occurs in Scripture both in the sense of a testament or will, and in that of a covenant, Heb. ix. 16; Gal. iii. 15. It seems less properly applied to the ancient Scriptures in the former sense, since the death of Moses had no concern whatever in the establishment or efficacy of the Jewish religion; but, in the latter sense, it very properly signifies the covenant between God and his chosen people. The same word, when applied in the sense of a testament to the books which contain the Christian dispensation, may refer to the death of Christ, which forms an essential part of his religion; but even in this case it would perhaps have been better translated by the word "covenant," as referring to the conditions on which God is pleased to offer

salvation to his sinful creatures, through the mediation of his only Son, Jesus Christ.

The books of the Old Testament were originally written in Hebrew, those of the New Testament in Greek.

The principal translation of the Old Testament into the Greek language, is that which is called the Septuagint. This name is derived from the Latin word Septuaginta, Seventy, the version being related to have been made by seventy or seventy-two interpreters. It is recorded that, about the year before Christ 277, Ptolemy Philadelphus, being intent on forming a great library at Alexandria in Egypt, sent to Eleazer the high priest of the Jews, to request a copy of the law of Moses; and, as he was ignorant of the Hebrew tongue, he further desired that some men of sufficient capacity might be sent to translate it into Greek. The messengers, who went upon this errand, and carried with them many rich presents for the temple, were received with great honour and respect, both by the high priest, and all the people; and having received a copy of the law of Moses, and six elders having been assigned out of each tribe (seventy-two in all) to translate it, returned to Alexandria. Upon their arrival, the elders betook themselves to the work, and first translated the Pentateuch, afterwards the rest of

the Old Testament, into the Greek. Whatever may be thought of the truth of this story, it is certain that the translation, called the Septuagint, was held in esteem and veneration almost equal to the original, and was not only used by the Jews in their dispersion through the Grecian cities, but approved by the great Sanhedrim at Jerusalem, and quoted and referred to by our blessed Saviour and his Apostles.

The Bible comprehends, in the grandest and most magnificent order, the various dispensations of God to mankind from the forming of this earth to the consummation of all things. It begins with the groundwork of natural religion, the creation of the universe by one holy and good and wise Being: relating distinctly how all those parts of it, to which the heathens paid divine worship, were in truth the work of God's hands. It proceeds to the origin of the Patriarchal, Jewish, and Christian religion, the introduction of sin by the fall of our first parents, of which we experience the wretched effects. It goes on to that amazing punishment of sin, the universal deluge, proved to be as certain, as it was wonderful, by the remaining traces of it throughout the globe. It then recites the second peopling of the world, the relapse of mankind into wickedness, the choice of one family and people to

preserve the knowledge of God, and to be as a light shining in a dark place, for the benefit of all about them, that would turn their eyes and feet to the way of peace. It lays before us the laws given to this people; it recounts their history chiefly with regard to their moral and religious behaviour, and dwells on the character and actions of their most remarkable persons. It supplies us with admirable patterns of genuine piety in the Psalms, most virtuous instructions for the prudent conduct of life in the book of Proverbs, for bearing afflictions in that of Job, for thinking justly of wealth, honour, pleasure, science, in Ecclesiastes. Then, in the prophetical books, it gives us, together with the sublimest and worthiest ideas of God, and our duties towards him, the most affecting denunciations of that private and public misery and ruin which will ever attend sin, whether cloaked by superstition or displayed in profaneness. And, along with all these things, it unfolds a series of predictions, reaching from the beginning of the Old Testament to the end; and growing, from obscure and general, continually clearer and more determinate, concerning the appearance of a divine Person on earth, for the recovery of fallen men, and for the revival and propagation of true religion throughout the world. The books of the New

Testament open to us the execution of this great design. The Gospel records his supernatural birth, his unspotted and exemplary life, his astonishing and gracious miracles, his pure and benevolent doctrine, his dying for our offences, and rising again for our justification; his mission of fit persons endued with the gifts of the Holy Spirit to teach all nations, his own ascension into heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God, till he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. The Acts of the Apostles represent the wonderful success of their preaching, and the original foundation of the catholic church. The Epistles contain their admirable directions to clergy and laity; and the Revelation concludes with foretelling the state of Christianity, primitive, degenerate, and reformed, to the last ages. A grander, a more comprehensive, and more useful scheme of instruction than this, cannot possibly be conceived.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

OLD TESTAMENT.

THE Old Testament contains those sacred books which were composed, previously to the birth of our Saviour, by the successive Prophets and inspired writers whom it pleased God to raise up from time to time, through a period of more than a thousand years. These books are written in Hebrew, and they are the only writings now extant in that language. The Old Testament, according to our Bibles, consists of thirty-nine books; but among the Jews they formed only twenty-two, which was also the number of letters in their alphabet. They divided these twenty-two books into three classes; the first class consisted of five books, namely, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, which they called the Law: the second class consisted of thirteen books, namely, Joshua, Judges and Ruth in one book, the two books of Samuel, of Kings, and of Chronicles, respectively, in single books, Ezra and Nehemiah in one book, Esther, Job, Isaiah, the two books of Jeremiah in one, Ezekiel, Daniel, and the twelve Minor Prophets in one book; these thirteen books they called the Prophets: the third class consisted

of the four remaining books, namely, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon, which four books the Jews call Chetubim, and the Greeks Hagiographa; this class was also called the Psalms from the name of the first book in it. This threefold division was naturally suggested by the books themselves; it was used merely for convenience, and did not proceed from any opinion of difference in the authority of the books of the several classes. In like manner, the Minor Prophets were so called, from the brevity of their works, and not from any supposed inferiority to the other Prophets. The books are not, in all instances, arranged in our Bibles according to the order of time in which they were written; but the book of Genesis was the earliest composition contained in the sacred volume, except, as some think, the book of Job; and the book of Malachi was certainly the latest book of the Old Testament.

The five first books of the Bible, generally known by the name of Pentateuch, are frequently cited both in the Old and the New Testament under the name of the Law. It appears from Deuteronomy, (ch. xxxi. 26,) that the book of the Law, that is, the whole Pentateuch, written by the hand of Moses, was, by his command, deposited in the tabernacle, not long before his death. It was kept there not only while the Israelites remained in the wilderness, but afterwards, when they were settled in the land of Canaan. To the same sanctuary were consigned, as they were successively produced, the other sacred books, which were written before the building of the temple

Jerusalem. And when Solomon had finished the temple, he directed that these books should be removed into it; and also, that the future compositions of inspired men should be secured in the same holy place. We may therefore conclude, that the respective works of Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Joel, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, and Obadiah, all of whom flourished before the Babylonian captivity, were regularly deposited in the temple. Whether these manuscripts perished in the flames, when the temple was burnt by Nebuchadnezzar, we are not informed; but as the burning of the Scriptures is not lamented by any of the contemporary or succeeding Prophets, and as the other treasures of the temple were preserved and set apart as sacred by Nebuchadnezzar, it is probable that these original manuscripts also were saved; and more especially, as it does not appear that Nebuchadnezzar had any particular enmity against the religion of the Jews. If however the original books were destroyed with the temple, it is certain that there were at that time numerous copies of them; and we cannot doubt but some of them were carried by the Jews to Babylon, and that others were left in Judea. The Holy Scriptures were too much reverenced, and too much dispersed, to make it credible that all the copies were lost or destroyed; and indeed we find Daniel, when in captivity (ch. ix. 11, 13), referring to the book of the Law as then existing, and soon after the captivity (Neh. viii.), Ezra not only read and explained the Law to the people, but he restored the public worship and the sacrifices

according to the Mosaic ritual; and therefore there must have been, at that time, at least a correct copy of the Law; for it is impossible to believe that he would have attempted the re-establishment of a church, in which the most minute observance of the rites and ceremonies prescribed by Moses was not only absolutely necessary for the acceptable performance of divine worship, but the slightest deviation from which was considered as sacrilege or abomination, unless he had been in actual possession either of the original manuscript of the Law, or of a copy so well authenticated as to leave no doubt of its accuracy in the minds of the people.

There is an uncontradicted tradition in the Jewish church, that, about fifty years after the temple was rebuilt, Ezra, in conjunction with the great synagogue, made a collection of the sacred writings, which had increased, since the Jews were carried into captivity, by the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and the Prophecies of Ezekiel, of Daniel, Haggai, and Zechariah; and as Ezra was himself inspired, we may rest assured, that whatever received his sanction was authentic. To this genuine collection, which, according to former custom, was placed in the temple, were afterwards annexed the sacred compositions of Ezra himself, as well as those of Nehemiah and Malachi, which were written after the death of Ezra. This addition, which was probably made by Simon the Just, the last of the great synagogue, completed the Canon of the Old Testament; for after Malachi no Prophet arose till the time of John the Baptist, who, as it were, connected the two covenants, and of whom

Malachi foretold (ch. iv. 5), that he should precede "the great day of the Lord," that is, the coming of the Messiah. It cannot now be ascertained, whether Ezra's copy of the Scriptures was destroyed by Antiochus Epiphanes, when he pillaged the temple; nor is it material, since we know that Judas Maccabeus repaired the temple, and replaced every thing requisite for the performance of divine worship, which included a correct, if not Ezra's own, copy of the Scriptures. This copy, whether Ezra's or not, remained in the temple till Jerusalem was taken by Titus, and it was then carried in triumph to Rome, and laid up with the purple veil in the royal palace of Vespasian.

Thus, while the Jewish polity continued, and nearly 500 years after the time of Ezra, a complete and faultless copy of the Hebrew Canon was kept in the temple at Jerusalem, with which all others might be compared. And it ought to be observed, that although Christ frequently reproved the rulers and teachers of the Jews for their erroneous and false doctrines, yet he never accused them of any corruption in their written Law, or other sacred books: and St. Paul reckons among the privileges of the Jews, "that unto them were committed the oracles of God" (Rom. iii. 2), without insinuating that they had been unfaithful to their trust. After the final destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, there was no established standard of the Hebrew Scriptures; but from that time, the dispersion of the Jews into all countries, and the numerous converts to Christianity, became a double security for the preservation of a volume held equally sacred

by Jews and Christians, and to which both con stantly referred as to the written word of God They differed in the interpretation of these books but never disputed the validity of the text in any material point.

The books of the Old Testament have been always allowed, in every age and by every sect of the Hebrew church, to be the genuine works of those persons to whom they are usually ascribed and they have also been, universally and exclusively, without any addition or exception, considered by the Jews as written under the immediate influence of the Divine Spirit. Those who were contemporaries with the respective writers of these books, had the clearest evidence, that they acted and spoke by the authority of God himself and this testimony transmitted to all succeeding ages, was in many cases strengthened and confirmed by the gradual fulfilment of predictions contained in their writings.

But the most decisive proof of the authenticity and inspiration of the ancient Scriptures is derived from the New Testament. The Saviour of the world himself, even he who came expressly from the Father of truth "to bear witness to the truth," in the last instructions which he gave to his apostles just before his ascension, said, "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me," Luke xxiv. 44. Our Lord, by thus adopting the common division of the Law, the Prophets, and the

Psalms, which comprehended all the Hebrew Scriptures, ratified the Canon of the Old Testament as it was received by the Jews; and by declaring that those books contained prophecies which must be fulfilled, he established their divine inspiration, since God alone can enable men to foretell future events. At another time Christ told the Jews, that they made "the word of God of none effect through their traditions," Mark vii. 13. By thus calling the written rules which the Jews had received for the conduct of their lives, "the word of God," he declared that the Hebrew Scriptures proceeded from God himself. Upon many other occasions Christ referred to the Scriptures as books of divine authority; and both he and his apostles constantly endeavoured to prove that Jesus was the Messiah foretold in the writings of the Prophets. St. Paul bears strong testimony to the divine authority of the Jewish Scriptures, when he says to Timothy (2 Tim. iii. 15,) "From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation, through faith, which is in Christ Jesus." This passage incontestably proves the importance of the ancient Scriptures, and the connexion between the Mosaic and Christian dispensations:—and in the next verse the apostle expressly declares the inspiration of Scripture; "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." To the same effect St. Luke says (ch. i. 70), that "God spake by the mouth of his holy Prophets." And St. Peter tells us, that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy

Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 21. In addition to these passages, which refer to the ancient Scriptures collectively, we may observe, that there is scarcely a book in the Old Testament, which is not repeatedly quoted in the New, as of divine authority.

When it is said that Scripture is divinely inspired, it is not to be understood that God suggested every word, or dictated every expression. It appears from the different style in which the books are written, and from the different manner which the same events are related and predicted by different authors, that the sacred penmen were permitted to write as their several tempers, understandings, and habits of life, directed; and that the knowledge communicated to them by inspiration upon the subject of their writings, was applied in the same manner as any knowledge acquired by ordinary means. Nor is it to be supposed that they were even thus inspired in every fact which they related, or in every precept which they delivered. They were left to the common use of their faculties, and did not upon every occasion stand in need of supernatural communication; but whenever, and as far as, divine assistance was necessary, it was always afforded. In different parts of Scripture we perceive that there were different sorts and degrees of inspiration: God enabled Moses to give an account of the creation of the world; he enabled Joshua to record with exactness the settlement of the Israelites in the land of Canaan; he enabled David to mingle prophetic information with the varied effusions of gratitude, contrition, and piety; he enabled Solo-

mon to deliver wise instructions for the regulation of human life; he enabled Isaiah to deliver predictions concerning the future Saviour of mankind, and Ezra to collect the sacred Scriptures into one authentic volume; "but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will," 1 Cor. xii. 11. In some cases inspiration only produced correctness and accuracy in relating past occurrences, or in reciting the words of others; in other cases it communicated ideas not only new and unknown before, but infinitely beyond the reach of unassisted human intellect; and sometimes inspired Prophets delivered predictions for the use of future ages, which they did not themselves comprehend, and which cannot be fully understood till they are accomplished. But whatever distinctions we may make with respect to the sorts, degrees, or modes of inspiration, we may rest assured that there is one property which belongs to every inspired writing, namely, that it is free from error, I mean material error; and this property must be considered as extending to the whole of each of those writings, of which a part only is inspired; for we cannot suppose that God would suffer any such errors, as might tend to mislead our faith or pervert our practice, to be mixed with those truths, which he himself has mercifully revealed to his rational creatures as the means of their eternal salvation. In this restricted sense it may be asserted, that the sacred writers always wrote under the influence, or guidance, or care, of the Holy Spirit

which sufficiently establishes the truth and divine authority of all Scripture.

These observations relative to the nature of inspiration, are particularly applicable to the historical books of the Old Testament. That the authors of these books were occasionally inspired is certain, since they frequently display an acquaintance with the counsels and designs of God, and often reveal his future dispensations in the clearest predictions; but, though it is evident that the sacred historians sometimes wrote under the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit, it does not follow that they derived from revelation the knowledge of those things, which might be collected from the common sources of human intelligence. It is sufficient to believe, that by the general superintendance of the Holy Spirit, they were directed in the choice of their materials, enlightened to judge of the truth and importance of those accounts from which they borrowed their information, and prevented from registering any material error. The historical books appear, indeed, from internal evidence, to have been chiefly written by persons contemporary with the periods to which they relate; who, in their description of characters and events, many of which they witnessed, uniformly exhibit a strict sincerity of intention, and an unexampled impartiality.

If it be asked by what rule we are to distinguish the inspired from the uninspired parts of these books, it is to be answered, that no general rule can be prescribed for that purpose. Nor is it necessary

that we should be able to make any such discrimination. It is enough for us to know, that every writer of the Old Testament was inspired, and that the whole of the history it contains, without any exception or reserve, is true. These points being ascertained and allowed, it is of very little consequence, whether the knowledge of a particular fact was obtained by any of the ordinary modes of information, or whether it was communicated by immediate revelation from God; whether any particular passage was written by the natural powers of the historian, or whether it was written by the positive suggestion of the Holy Spirit.

But whatever uncertainty there may be concerning the direct inspiration of any historical narrative, or of any moral precept, contained in the Old Testament, we must be fully convinced that all its prophetical parts proceeded from God. This is continually affirmed by the Prophets themselves, and is demonstrated by the indubitable testimony which history bears to the accurate fulfilment of many of these predictions; others are gradually receiving their accomplishment in the times in which we live, and afford the surest pledge and most positive security for the completion of those which remain to be fulfilled. The past, the present, and the future, have a connected reference to one great plan, which infinite wisdom, prescience, and power, could alone form, reveal, and execute. Every succeeding age throws an increasing light upon these sacred writings, and contributes additional evidence to their divine origin.

GENESIS.

THE first five Books of the Bible, commonly called the Pentateuch, were composed by Moses, as the concurrent testimonies of all ages declare; and as hath ever been firmly believed by the Jews, with whom the fact continues to this day to be one of the thirteen articles of their creed. The word "Pentateuch" is of Greek original; being compounded of two words, signifying *five*, and *book*, or *volume*. It was probably first prefixed to the Greek version of the "Septuagint," or seventy translators, to denote Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy: all of which had been written by the hand of Moses in Hebrew, probably in the order in which they now stand, though not distributed by their author into books, but forming one continued work.

The first book is usually entitled Genesis, from a Greek word, which signifies *generation;* and is so called, because it contains the history of the Creation of the World, and the genealogy of the Patriarchs.

Moses was assisted by the Holy Spirit in the composition of this important work, which forms a proper introduction to the laws and judgments delivered in the subsequent books. The description, which he gives in it, of the Creation, as relating to circumstances before the existence of mankind, could be derived only from immediate revelation. As to subsequent events, the Israelites

must have been able to judge by tradition how far the account of Moses was consistent with truth. For that tradition was conveyed from Adam to Moses through seven intermediate persons; namely, Methuselah, Noah, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Joseph, and Amram, the father of Moses. The sacred character of this book is established by the internal evidence of its inspiration; by the revealed history of the Creation of the World; by the several predictions, afterwards fully accomplished; and lastly by the testimony of our Saviour and his Apostles.

This book comprehends a period of two thousand three hundred and sixty-nine years, or thereabouts. It begins with the history of the Creation of the World in six days, and contains also an account of the disobedience and punishment of Adam and Eve; the increase of mankind; the progress of wickedness; the general destruction of the human race by the deluge, except Noah and his family, who were miraculously preserved in the ark; the promise of God, that the world should no more be destroyed by a flood; the confusion of tongues, and the dispersion of the descendants of Noah; the call of Abraham, and the covenant of God with him; the repetition of that covenant with Isaac and Jacob; the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah; the history of Joseph; and the settlement of the Israelites in Egypt. This is the oldest book in the world. And it is remarkable, that the books which come nearest to it in age are those which make either the most distinct mention of, or the most evident allusion to, the facts related

in Genesis concerning the formation of the world from a chaotic mass, the primeval innocence and subsequent fall of man, the longevity of mankind in the first ages of the world, the depravity of the antedeluvians, and the destruction of the world by a deluge.

EXODUS.

The title of this Second Book of Moses is descriptive of its contents. The word Exodus is of Greek derivation, and signifies a *going out* or *departing* from one place to another. The book relates the departure of the Israelites out of Egypt, after a previous description of their state of servitude, of the appointment of Moses, and of the miracles by which he effected their deliverance. It presents us also with the account of their journey through the wilderness, of the solemn promulgation of the law at mount Sinai, of the delivery of the ten commandments, and of the building of the tabernacle. It is universally allowed to be written by Moses, and the words of Exodus are cited as the words of Moses, by Daniel, David, and other sacred writers: there are, besides, no less than twenty-five passages from this book, quoted by Christ and his Apostles in express words, and nineteen more as to the sense.

Exodus contains a history of one hundred and forty-five years, or perhaps of a somewhat shorter period.

Besides historical events, this book contains some

predictions, of which it records also the accomplishment; as that of the deliverance of the Jews, which Moses foresaw and effected (Exod. vii. 4, 5.).—It likewise describes some which were not fulfilled till after his death, as that concerning the conquest of Canaan, and the future division and allotment of the land; also those relating to the revolutions that were to take place in the government of the Jews, their future subjections, captivities, deliverances, and returns.

Moses proceeds in this book in such an order, as was most natural to a writer, relating the different occurrences which took place, exactly as they took place. The history is perpetually interrupted with exact details of the laws, as they were occasionally delivered: with minute, and even tedious, though necessary descriptions of the materials and work of the tabernacle and its furniture, of the altar, the ark, the dress of the priests, and the mode of offering the sacrifices: these are detailed in the most inartificial manner, if we consider the book as intended for a *regular* and *finished* composition.

LEVITICUS.

The Book of Leviticus is so called, because it is chiefly employed in describing the sacrifices and services of the tabernacle, to be performed by that holy order of men who were of the tribe of Levi, and in detailing the particulars which related to the discharge of the priestly office; the historical parts of this book being extremely few.

That Moses was the author of this book is shewn not only by the general arguments which prove him to have written the Pentateuch, but appears also from particular passages in other books of Scripture, in which this is expressly cited as his inspired work. The delivery of these laws, it is supposed, was included in the space of one month.

The two main designs of the Jewish law seem to have been, to oppose the idolatry and false worship so universally prevalent in the heathen world, and to prefigure the spiritual religion of Jesus Christ, the promised Saviour. As to the former of these designs, many particular customs and usages are forbidden the Jewish nation, for the prohibition of which we can in no way account, except by taking them under this view of an intended opposition to the several superstitions of the Gentiles. The chief difficulty under which we labour in this matter is, that we cannot determine what particular idolatrous customs were prevailing in the time of Moses; so vastly distant is the time, and so short the records of ancient nations.

The religious services prescribed in this book are reduced to the following heads:

First, Sacrifices of different kinds. Though these were outward rites of religious service, yet did they carry with them their several meanings, which had relation to spiritual religion and worship, while the whole was a typical scheme, and a fit introduction to that more perfect dispensation of Jesus Christ the Messiah, by whom all mankind were to receive full atonement with God, and be

blessed with the more pure revelation of his perfe
will and way of worship.

Secondly, Purifications from legal uncleannesse
These were a numerous and burdensome part
the Israelitish religion: but they were not intende
to terminate in mere ritual observance: they wer
most aptly significant of many things tending
inward and substantial religion, such as reverenc
towards God's house, his worship, and all hol
things appropriated to his service: they represente
also the necessity of inward purity of heart, life
and principles; the difficulty of rooting out ev
habits from the mind, and the danger of sinfu
affections in such as worship the true God, and ar
related to him as his peculiar people. These an
other such things were represented by the purifi
cations of the Jewish law, always with a view t
the promised Redeemer, who was in the mos
perfect manner to cleanse us by his blood, enlighte
us by his doctrine, and purify us by his Spirit.

Thirdly, Various solemn festivals. The exac
and pompous observance of these was so far fron
being a needless and trivial institution, that they
appear to have been exceedingly proper for pre
serving the whole nation in the practice of tru
religion. They were thankful commemorations o
the most signal national mercies and deliverances
mercies that formed the foundation of all thei
blessings, peace, and prosperity, as an unite
church and people: and, by their constant attend
ance on these joyful solemnities, at so many state
times of the year, and at the one fixed place o
national worship, the people went through thos

courses of pious service to God, and that intercourse of kindness, generosity, and charity towards each other, which tended to make them adhere to the religion of the true God, and to confirm them in the love of that constitution under which they lived, surrounded with the uncommon blessings of his providence.

If in parts of the Jewish law we should meet with some directions, the utility of which should not be at first sight apparent to us, let us beware of setting up the conclusions of our own reason against the unbounded wisdom of God. A closer consideration of the subject will teach us humbly to acknowledge that all these institutions answered the purpose of exercising the Israelites in faith and obedience; of preserving them a distinct and separate people, and of training them by a peculiar mode of discipline, wisely suited to their habits, prejudices, and circumstances, for the reception of the new dispensation under the Messiah. It will teach us also, that many of those directions, which rashness and presumption sometimes censure as trifling, and as unworthy of the divine attention, were specifically calculated to guard the people of Israel, from being betrayed into particular modes of idolatry and wickedness, prevalent in the nations amongst whom they were to dwell.

NUMBERS.

This book is called the Book of Numbers, because it contains an account of the numbering of

mustering of the people; or rather, indeed, of two numberings: the first in the beginning of the second year after their departure from Egypt; the second in the plains of Moab, towards the conclusion of their journey in the wilderness. It is certain that Moses was the inspired author of the book, and that he delivers in it nothing but what is consistent with truth, and agreeable to the divine will, since it constitutes part of the Pentateuch, which in all ages has been universally ascribed to Moses, and it is cited as his inspired work in various parts of Scripture.

The book comprehends a period of about thirty-eight years, reckoning from the first day of the second month after the deliverance from Egypt, during which time the Israelites continued to wander in the wilderness. Most of the transactions, however, described in this book, happened in the first and last of these years. The date of those events which are recorded in the middle of the book cannot be precisely ascertained.

The history presents us with an account of the consecration of the tabernacle, and of the offering of the princes at its dedication. It describes the journies and encampments of Israel under the miraculous guidance of the cloud; the punishment at Taberah; and the signal vengeance with which, on several occasions, God resented the distrustful murmurs of the people, and that rebellious spirit which so often broke out in sedition against his appointed ministers, particularly in the affair of Korah, which is described with great animation. The promptitude and severity with which God

enforced a respect for his laws, even to the exemplary condemnation of the man who profaned the sabbath, were necessary, when even a sense of the immediate presence of the Almighty, and a consideration of the miracles daily performed, failed to produce obedience. Amidst the terrors, however, of the divine judgments which the book unfolds, we perceive likewise the continuance of God's mercies in providing assistance for Moses by the appointment of the seventy elders; in drawing water from the rock; and in the setting up of the brazen serpent. The benevolent zeal of Moses to intercede on all occasions for the people, even when punished for ungrateful insurrection against himself, deserves likewise to be considered. The history is enlivened with much variety of event; and, besides the particulars above alluded to, it contains the account of the resignation and death of Aaron; of the conquest of Sihon and Og; of the conduct of Balaam towards Balak; of the merited fate of Balaam; of the insidious project to seduce the Israelites, its success and effects; and of the appointment of Joshua. The book contains likewise a repetition of many principal laws given for the direction of the Israelites, with the addition of several precepts civil and religious. It describes some regulations established for the ordering of the tribes, and for the division of the land which the Israelites were about to possess. It furnishes us also with a list of the tribes; and with that of Levi in particular, which is reserved for a distinct roll, because that tribe was in possession of an order in the priesthood.

The most signal prophecies, which are contained in this book, and bear testimony to its inspiration, are those blessings which Balaam was constrained to utter concerning the future prosperity of the Israelites, and the destruction of their several enemies; especially in that distinct and ecstatic description of the "Star which should come out of Jacob, and of the sceptre that should rise out of Israel." The denunciation likewise against Moses and Aaron for their disbelief, as well as the threats against the people for their murmurs, and the declaration, that none but Caleb and Joshua should enter the land, were strikingly fulfilled; and it may be added, that the rites of the Passover, of which the observance is again enjoined in this book, were figurative representations of a predictive character.

DEUTERONOMY.

The fifth and last book of the Pentateuch is called "Deuteronomy," a word composed of two Greek words, signifying *a repetition of the law.* It contains indeed a compendious repetition of the law, enlarged with many explanatory additions, and enforced by the strongest and most pathetic exhortations to obedience; as well for the more forcible impression on the Israelites in general, as in particular for the benefit of those, who, being born in the wilderness, were not present at the first promulgation of the law. It is a kind of manual of divine wisdom; a commentary on the decalogue; and contains such laws as concerned the people in

eneral, as to their civil, military, and religious overnment, omitting, for the most part, what elated to the priests and Levites. It was delivered by Moses, a little time previous to his death, to the people whom he had long governed and instructed; and it was bequeathed, with his other writings, to the charge of the Levites, as the most valuable testimony of his regard, in the fortieth year after the departure from Egypt, in the year of the world 2552.

The book opens with an interesting address to the Israelites, in which Moses briefly recapitulates the many circumstances in which they had experienced the divine favour since their departure from Horeb. He describes the success and victories which had marked their progress; the incredulous murmurs and ingratitude, by which the people had incensed God; and the effects of the divine wrath; especially in the inexorable decree, by which he himself had been debarred from that land, for the possession of which he had so earnestly toiled. He proceeds with the most animated zeal to exhort them to future obedience: and to rehearse in a discourse, renewed at intervals, the various commandments, statutes, and judgments, which had been delivered to them by God, that they might become "a wise and understanding nation;" and fulfil the terms of that covenant which the Lord had made with them in Horeb. Moses, while he intersperses with these laws frequent reproaches for their past misconduct, unfolds the glorious attributes of God, and reiterates every persuasive motive to obedience. He com-

mands them to distinguish their first entrance into Canaan, by a public display of reverence for God's law: by erecting stones on which all its words and precepts might be inscribed. He enters into a new covenant with the people; which not only included that previously made at Horeb, but which renewed also and ratified those assurances of spiritual blessings, long before imparted to Abraham and his descendants. He then, in consistency with the promises and sanctions of both covenants, sets forth for their election, "life and good, and death and evil:" temporal and eternal recompense, or present and future punishment.

Deuteronomy contains a period of nearly two months: an history of the conclusion of the life of Moses, whose last days were distinguished by increasing solicitude, and by the most active exertions for the welfare of his people. After a commemorative hymn, in which he particularly exhorts them to "consider their latter end;" and after having uttered his prophetic blessings in solemn and appropriate promises to the several tribes, this great man is represented to have retired, by divine command, to the top of mount Nebo; from whence he had a prospect of Canaan, and foresaw the speedy accomplishment of God's promises. He then, in the full possession of his powers and faculties, when "his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated," died in the hundred and twentieth year of his age.

This book is cited as the book of Moses in many parts of Scripture, and numberless passages

are produced from it in testimony by Christ and his Apostles.

With respect to the prophetic part of Deuteronomy, it should be remarked, that the Messiah is here more explicitly foretold than in the preceding books, and described as the completion of the Jewish economy. "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." The prophecies of Moses increase in number and clearness towards the close of his writings. As he approached the end of his life, he appears to have discerned futurity with more exactness. His denunciation concerning the future rewards and punishments, the success, dispersions, and desolations of his people; his prophetic blessings on the tribes; his description of the rapid victories of the Romans; and of the miseries to be sustained by his besieged countrymen; and particularly his prophecies relative to their present condition, as accomplished under our own observation, bear a striking evidence to the truth and inspiration of his writings, and fearfully illustrate the character of the divine attributes.

The book of Deuteronomy brings down the sacred history to the year of the world 2552, and completes the volume of the Pentateuch, of which every part is uniformly and consistently perfect.

JOSHUA.

After the Pentateuch, we enter on those which are commonly called the Historical Books of the Old Testament; comprising the books of Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the two books of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles; also those of Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther. These books contain a compendium of the Jewish history for a period of one thousand and forty-two years: that is, from the death of Moses, in the year of the world 2553 (before Christ 1451), to the reformation established by Nehemiah, after the return from the captivity, in the year of the world 3595 (before Christ 409). In these books the object of the sacred historians is, to communicate instruction to mankind, and to illustrate the nature of God's providence, in small as well as great occurrences; in particular instances as well as general appointments. They therefore often descend from the great outline of national concerns to the minute details of private history. The relations however of individual events occasionally interspersed are highly interesting; and admirably develop the designs of the Almighty, and the character of those times to which they are respectively assigned. Those seeming digressions too, in which the inspired writers have recorded such remarkable events as related to particular personages, or such occurrences in foreign countries as

tended to affect the history of the Jews, are not only valuable for the religious spirit which they breathe, and the incidental evidence of authenticity which they afford, but are to be admired as strictly consistent with the sacred plan. These books therefore constitute an important part of the sacred volume; furnishing a complete code of instructive lessons, conveyed under every form, diversified with every style of composition, and enlivened with various illustrations of circumstance and character.

The book of Joshua continues the sacred history from the death of Moses to the deaths of Joshua and Eleazar, a space of about thirty years. It contains an account of the conquest and division of the land of Canaan, the renewal of the covenant with the Israelites, and the death of Joshua.

JUDGES.

This book has been variously attributed to Samuel, to Phinehas, to Hezekiah, to Ezekiel, and also to Ezra, who is supposed by some to have collected it from the memoirs which the several judges respectively furnished of their own government. It seems however most probable that Samuel was the author; who, being a prophet or seer, and described in the book of Chronicles as an historian, may reasonably be supposed, as he was the last of the judges, to have written this part of the Jewish history, since the inspired writers alone were permitted to describe those relations in which

were interwoven the instructions and judgments of the Lord.

The history of this book may be divided into two parts; the first, containing an account of the judges from Othniel to Samson, ending at the sixteenth chapter, the second part describing remarkable particulars which occurred not long after the death of Joshua, which are placed towards the end of the book, in the seventeenth and following chapters, that they may not interrupt the course of the history. What relates to the two last judges, Eli and Samuel, is recorded in the first book of Samuel. It comprehends a period of about three hundred and nine years from the death of Joshua to that of Samson; but there is great difficulty in settling the precise chronology of the several facts related in it, because many of them are reckoned from different eras, which cannot now be exactly ascertained. This book gives an account of the farther conquests of the Israelites in the land of Canaan, of their disobedience to the commands of God, and of their consequent subjection to the king of Mesopotamia.

RUTH.

The book of Ruth is so called from the name of the person, a native of Moab, whose history it contains. It may be considered as a supplement to the book of Judges, to which it was joined in the Hebrew canon, and the latter part of which it greatly resembles, being a detached story

belonging to the same period. Ruth had a son called Obed, who was the grandfather of David; which circumstance probably occasioned her history to be written, as the genealogy of David, from Pharez the son of Judah, from whom the Messiah was to spring, is here given: and some commentators have thought the descent of our Saviour from Ruth, a Gentile woman, to be an intimation of the comprehensive nature of the Christian dispensation. We are no where informed when Ruth lived; but, as king David was her great grandson, we may place her history about one thousand two hundred and fifty years before Christ. This book was certainly written after the birth of David, chap. iv. 22, and probably by the Prophet Samuel, though some have attributed it to Hezekiah, and others to Ezra. The subject of it is of so private a nature, that, at the time of its being written, the generality of people might not have thought it worth recording; but we Christians may plainly see the wisdom of God in having done it. It had been foretold to the Jews, that the Messiah should be of the tribe of Judah, and it was afterwards revealed further, that he should be of the family of David; it was therefore necessary, for the full understanding of these prophecies, that the history of the family of David in that tribe should be written before these prophecies were revealed, that so there might not be the least suspicion of fraud or design. And thus this book, these prophecies, and the accomplishment of them, serve to illustrate and explain each other.

THE FIRST BOOK OF SAMUEL.

THE two books of Samuel are styled, in the Vulgate or old Latin translation, the first and second books of Kings; as being two of those four books which contain the history of the kings of Israel and Judah. In the Hebrew they are considered as forming only one book.

The Hebrews suppose that Samuel wrote the twenty-four first chapters of the first book, and that the rest were added by the Prophets Gad and Nathan. This opinion is founded on these words in the first book of Chronicles, chap. xxix. 29, "Now the acts of David the king, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, and in the book of Nathan the Prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer;" and it is approved by many writers of considerable authority. We may therefore assent to this general opinion, that Samuel was the author of at least the greater part of the first book, and that he probably composed it towards the latter end of his life. Certain it is, that, from its admission into the canon, as well as from the predictions which it contains, the book was the production of a Prophet; not to mention that it is referred to by our Saviour in vindication of his disciples, Matt. xii. 3, 4.

The first book of Samuel opens with an account of the birth of Samuel. It describes his consecration to the ministry, and his appointment to the prophetical office; the capture of the ark, and the

completion of God's judgments on Eli's house; the curse on those who possessed the ark; its return, and the signal punishment of those who daringly profaned its sanctity; the election of Saul to be king; the wars and evils which arose, as had been foretold, in consequence of this change of government; the sins and rejection of Saul; the anointing of David, and the first display of his piety and heroism; the disinterested friendship of David and Jonathan; the ungenerous suspicions of Saul; the death of Samuel; the appearance of his spirit, denouncing God's judgments against the impiety of Saul; in the accomplishment of which the book terminates, with the account of the miserable fate of Saul and his sons. The sacred writer illustrates the characters, and describes the events of his history in the most engaging manner. The weak indulgence of Eli is well contrasted with the firm piety of Samuel. The rising virtues of David and the sad depravity of Saul are strikingly opposed. The sentiments and instructions scattered through the work are excellent; and the inspired hymn of Hannah furnishes us with a grand prophecy of Christ, who is here, for the first time in Scripture, described as the Messiah, or the Anoint of the Lord.

THE SECOND BOOK OF SAMU

The Second Book of Samuel bears an relation to the preceding history, and is lil connected with that which succeeds. The

contains a period of near forty years, from about A. M. 2948 to 2988. It describes the establishment and prosperity of David's reign; which he deserved, as well by his generous respect for the memory of Saul, as by the excellency of those many qualities which his maturer piety displayed. It relates the extinction of Saul's family, and David's grateful and unsuspicious kindness to the surviving son of Jonathan. The inspired author then records the fall of David; and exhibits a sad proof of the unhappy depravity to which the noblest minds may be seduced by passion. He represents to us God's anger softened, but not appeased, by David's repentance; who was soon after punished by the death of the child, and many domestic calamities. The transgression of Amnon was the first consequence of his bad example; and "evil rose up against him out of his own house" (Nathan's prophetic threat, chap. xii. 11.) in the ambitious intrigues and rebellion of Absalom. We soon behold him a degraded and fugitive sovereign, reviled by his meanest subjects, and severely punished for his conduct towards Uriah, by the incestuous outrage of his son, chap. xvi. 21, 22. The submissive repentance, however, and restored virtues of David, procured his pardon and re-establishment on his throne; which he dignified by the display of the greatest moderation, justice, and piety. If, in the exultation of his recovered prosperity, God suffered him (chap. xxiv. 1; and 1 Chron. xxi. 1.) to be betrayed into an ostentatious numbering of the people, "his heart smote him" to immediate repentance, and he piously

threw himself on God's mercy, and entreated that he only might suffer from the indignation which he had provoked. The vicissitude of events which the book describes, the fall and restoration of David, the effects of his errors, and his return to righteousness, are represented in the most interesting manner, and furnish valuable lessons to mankind. The author, in the concise style of sacred history, selects only the most striking features of character, and the most important incidents of those revolutions of which he treats; and among the conspicuous beauties of the book, we can never sufficiently admire the feeling lamentation over Saul and Jonathan, the expressive parable of Nathan, and the triumphant hymn of David.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

The two books of Kings formed only one in the Hebrew canon. They cannot be positively ascribed to any particular author: some have ascribed them to Jeremiah, some to Isaiah; and some, again, with more probability, suppose them to have been compiled by Ezra, from the records which were regularly kept, both in Jerusalem and Samaria, of all public transactions. These records appear to have been made by the contemporary Prophets, and frequently derived their names from the kings whose history they contain. They are mentioned in many parts of Scripture: thus, in the first book of Kings, we read of the Book of the Acts of Solomon, which is supposed to have

been written by Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo. We elsewhere read, that Shemaiah the prophet, and Iddo the seer, wrote the acts of Rehoboam; that Jehu wrote the acts of Jehoshaphat, and Isaiah those of Uzziah and Hezekiah. We may therefore conclude, that from these public records, and other authentic documents, were composed the two books of Kings; and the uniformity of their style favours the opinion of their being put into their present shape by the same person.

The first book of Kings comprises a period of one hundred and twenty-six years, from the death of David, in the year of the world 2989, to that of Jehoshaphat. After the description of the decay and death of David, we are presented with the most striking history of the reign of Solomon; of his wisdom and magnificence; of the building of the temple; of his extended commerce to Ophir; and of the visit of the queen of Sheba. To this succeeds an account of the miserable dotage and apostacy of Solomon; and of his death, preceded by a prospect of that threatened rending of the kingdom which should take place under his son. Afterwards are related the accession of Rehoboam; his rash and impolitic conduct, and the consequent separation of the ten tribes, which happened about the year of the world 3029. This is followed by a concise sketch of the history of the two kingdoms, in which particular periods are characterized by very animated relations; as that of the disobedient Prophet; of the widow of Zarephath; of Elijah and the prophets of Baal; of Benhadad's pride and defeat; of Ahab's injustice and punish-

ment. In the course of these events we contemplate the exact accomplishment of God's promises and threats, the wisdom of his dispensations, and the mingled justice and mercy of his government. The book is stamped with the intrinsic marks of inspiration: of the prophecies which it contains, some were speedily completed; but that which foretold that "Josiah should be born unto the house of David, and slay the priests of the high places," was not fulfilled till above three hundred and fifty years after it was delivered. Both the books of Kings are cited as authentic and canonical by our Saviour and his apostles.

THE

SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

THE history contained in this book records the government and actions of many successive kings of Judah and Israel, for the space of about three hundred years: from the death of Jehoshaphat, in the year of the world 3115, to the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple, 3416. The connexion and occasional quarrels which subsisted between the two nations during part of this time, till the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser, seem to have induced the sacred writers to blend the two histories, as in some measure treating of the same people. Both nations appear to have departed with almost equal steps from the service of the true God; and in the history of each we are pre-

sented with a succession of wicked and idolatrous kings till each had completed the measure of its iniquity.

Both Israel and Judah, though they invariably experienced prosperity and affliction in proportion to their obedience and disobedience, were infatuated by their perverse inclinations: and in a long series of their respective sovereigns we find a few only who were awakened by God's judgments to a sense of their true interest and duty. The whole period seems to have been dark and guilty; the glory of the kingdom being eclipsed by the calamities of the division, and by the increased miseries of idolatry and ambition. Successive tyrannies, treasons, seditions, and usurpations, and the instant punishment which they produced, serve at once to illustrate the evil character of the times, and the vigilant equity of the divine government. The events are described with great simplicity, though in themselves highly interesting and important. The account of Elijah's assumption into heaven, of Elisha's succession to his ministry, and of the series of illustrious miracles performed by Elisha; the story of Naaman, and of the panic fright of the Syrians; the history of Ben-hadad and Hazael; of the predicted death of Jezebel, and Ahab's children; and of the destruction of Baal's prophets, are all pregnant with instruction, and have furnished theme for frequent dissertation. We perceive, in these impressive histories, the characters and qualities of men painted with great fidelity; and the attributes of God displayed with great effect. The particulars

and circumstances are sketched out with a brief and lively description, and the imagination lingers with pleasure in filling up those striking outlines that are presented to our view. The sacred author, regardless of minute order, and of the succession of events, seems sometimes desirous only of furnishing us with a view of the state of religion among the people, and of illustrating the genealogy of Christ. In particular, we observe how the revolt of the ten tribes, and their subsequent captivity, contributed to keep up the distinction of the tribe of Judah; and to make the prophecies, which foretold that the Messiah should descend from this branch, more conspicuously accomplished.

After the captivity of the ten tribes, the colony brought up from Babylon and other places adopted the Hebrew religion, and blended it with their own idolatries; and henceforward, in point of time, we hear little of the inhabitants of Samaria. The kingdom of Judah still continued for above a century to provoke God's anger by its disobedience and idolatry, notwithstanding Isaiah and many other Prophets conspired, during all this period, to exhort the people to repentance, by every motive of interest and fear. The good reign of Hezekiah, though lengthened by Divine Providence, was too soon succeeded by the "evil days of Manasseh," in whose time the temple, and even the volume of the law, seem to have been almost entirely neglected. In the reign of Josiah, religion for a short time revived; the public copy of the law was discovered, and read (chap. xxii. 8; xxiii. 2.) and idolatry for a few months suppressed: but the tide

of iniquity having rolled back with accumulated force, Jerusalem is besieged and taken, the city and temple spoiled, and the noblest of the nation led captive to Babylon.

The book concludes with the account of the second siege by Nebuchadnezzar, which happened about eighteen years after the first; then the city and temple were burnt; and, soon after, the whole destruction was completed by the massacre or flight of the remnant which had been left amidst the ruined cities of Judea.

The beginning and end of these Jewish kingdoms are eminent demonstrations of the wisdom and justice of Providence, and of the truth of the many promises and threats made to the people of Israel; they are a great confirmation of the Mosaical history, and of our whole religion, as completed by Jesus Christ.

THE FIRST BOOK OF

THE CHRONICLES.

The two books of Chronicles formed but one in the Hebrew canon, which was called the Book of Diaries or Journals. In the Septuagint version they were called, the books of "things omitted;" and they were first named the books of Chronicles by St. Jerome. They are supposed to be designed as a kind of supplement to the preceding books of Scripture, to supply such important particulars as had been admitted, because inconsistent with the

plan of former books. They are generally, and with much probability, attributed to Ezra, whose book, which bears his name, is written with a similar style of expression, and appears to be a continuation of them. Ezra may have compiled these books, by the assistance of Haggai and Nehemiah, from historical records, and the accounts of contemporary prophets. The former part of the first book of Chronicles contains a great variety of genealogical tables, beginning with Adam; and in particular gives a circumstantial account of the twelve tribes, which must have been very valuable to the Jews after their return from captivity. The descendants of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David, from all of whom it was predicted that the Saviour of the world should be born, are here marked with precision. These genealogies occupy the first nine chapters, and in the tenth is recorded the death of Saul. From the eleventh chapter to the end of the book, we have a history of the reign of David, with a detailed statement of his preparations for the building of the temple, of his regulations respecting the priests and Levites, and his appointment of musicians for the public service of religion.

The books of Chronicles, though they contain many particulars related in preceding books, and supply several circumstances omitted in preceding accounts, are not to be considered merely as an abridgment of former histories, with some supplementary additions, but as books written with a particular view; in consistency with which, the author sometimes disregards important particulars in those accounts from which he might have com-

piled his work, and adheres to the design proposed, which seems to have been to furnish a genealogical sketch of the twelve tribes, deduced from the earliest times: in order to point out those distinctions which were necessary to discriminate the mixed multitude that returned from Babylon; to ascertain the lineage of Judah; and to re-establish on their ancient footing the pretensions and functions of each individual tribe.

THE SECOND BOOK OF

THE CHRONICLES.

The second book of Chronicles contains a brief sketch of the sacred history from the accession of Solomon to the throne, in the year of the world 2989 (before Christ 1015), to the return from captivity, in the year 3468 (before Christ 536). It contains many things omitted in the historical books which precede. It begins with a description of the reign of Solomon, and dilates with particular exactness on the munificent piety of that monarch in the construction of the temple, minutely specifying its ornaments as typical of spiritual decorations which were to embellish the Christian church; a subject highly interesting and useful to the Jews, who, at the time when this book was written, were preparing to rebuild the temple. Hence the account of the solemn consecration of the first building; of the noble and comprehensive prayer of Solomon and of the covenanted promises which God gra

ciously imparted at the dedication, must have furnished much consolation to the Jews, scarce yet reviving from the despondence of captives. Then is repeated from the book of Kings, the representation of the magnificence and prosperity which Solomon enjoyed agreeably to God's promise, chap. i. 11, 12. After this we are furnished with a recapitulation of the history of the kings of Judah, occasionally intermixed with relations respecting Israel, when connected with Judah.

These accounts, however, in the books of Chronicles, are enriched with many additional particulars. They present us with a lively picture of the state of the kingdom of Judah; and of the various vicissitudes and revolutions which it sustained under different princes. They serve, as the author seems to have designed, greatly to illustrate the necessity of depending on God for defence, without whose protection kingdoms must fall. The advantage derived from obedience to God, and the miseries that resulted from wickedness and sin, are strikingly shewn. The book abounds with useful examples, and the characters are forcibly displayed by a contrasted succession of pious and depraved princes. The change and defection even of individual persons, and their decline from righteousness to evil, are shewn with much effect. The rebellion of Israel, and the contest between the two kingdoms; the preservation of Joash from the destruction which overwhelmed the rest of the house of Judah; the struggles between idolatry and true religion; the seasonable discovery of the copy of the law; with many other interesting particulars

which exhibit the interposition of the Almighty defeating evil, and effecting his concerted purposes, deserve to be considered with great attention.

The following is a list of the Kings of Israel and Judah, with the dates when they respectively began to reign.

Years before Christ.	Kings of the Twelve Tribes.
1095	Saul.
1055	David.
1015	Solomon.

Years before Christ.	Kings of Judah.	Kings of Israel.
975	Rehoboam	Jeroboam.
958	Abijam	
955	Asa	
954		Nadab.
953		Baasha.
930		Elah.
929		Zimri.
929		Omri.
918		Ahab.
914	Jehoshaphat	
898		Ahaziah.
896		Jehoram (or Joram.)
892	Jehoram (or Joram)	
885	Ahaziah	
884	Athaliah	Jehu.
878	Joash	
856		Jehoahaz.
841		Jehoash (or Joash.)
839	Amaziah	
825		Jeroboam II.
810	Azariah (or Uzziah)	

Years before Christ.	Kings of Judah.	Kings of Israel.
773	. . . . .	Zachariah.
772	. . . . .	Shallum.
772	. . . . .	Menahem.
761	. . . . .	Pekahiah.
759	. . . . .	Pekah.
758	Jotham	
742	Ahaz	
740	. . . . .	First Captivity of Israel by Tiglath-pileser.
—	. . . . .	An Interregnum.
730	. . . . .	Hoshea.
726	Hezekiah	
721	. . . . .	Second Captivity of Israel by Shalmaneser.
698	Manasseh	
678	. . . . .	Third Captivity of Israel by Esarhaddon.
643	Amon	
641	Josiah	
610	Jehoahaz	
610	Jehoiakim	
606	First Captivity of Judah	
599	Jehoiachin (otherwise Coniah and Jeconiah) . . .	
599	Second Captivity of Judah	
599	Zedekiah	

Years before Christ.	Kings of Judah.	Kings of Israel.
588	Third and final Captivity of Judah and of the remains of Israel.	

EZRA.

This book derives its name from Ezra, the author of it. It begins with a repetition of the last two verses of the second book of Chronicles, and carries the Jewish history through a period of seventy-nine years, commencing from the edict of Cyrus. The first six chapters contain an account of the return of the Jews under Zerubbabel, after the captivity of seventy years; of their re-establishment in Judea, and of the building and dedication of the temple at Jerusalem. In the last four chapters Ezra relates his own appointment to the government of Judea by Artaxerxes Longimanus; his journey thither from Babylon; the disobedience of the Jews; and the reform which he immediately effected among them. It is to be observed, that between the dedication of the temple and the departure of Ezra, that is, between the sixth and seventh chapters of this book, there was an interval of about fifty-eight years, during which nothing is here related concerning the Jews, except that, contrary to God's command, they intermarried with Gentiles.

This book is written in Chaldee from the eighth verse of the fourth chapter to the twenty-seventh

verse of the seventh chapter. It is probable that the sacred historian used the Chaldee language in this part of his work, because it contains chiefly letters and decrees written in that language, the original words of which he might think it right to record; and indeed the people, who were recently returned from the Babylonian captivity, were at least as familiar with the Chaldee, as they were with the Hebrew tongue.

This book is written with all the spirit and fidelity that could be displayed by a writer of contemporary events. The sacred writers pass over the time of the captivity as a sad period of affliction and punishment: during which, if the people were indulged in the exercise of their religion, they had few historical events to record; and therefore we have no general history of their circumstances; and must have recourse to the books of those illustrious prophets who flourished among them in Assyria, for the only particulars that can be obtained concerning their condition.

Ezra was of the sacerdotal family, a descendant of Seraiah in a right line from Aaron. He succeeded Zerubbabel in the government of Judea, by a commission which lasted twelve years, to the year of the world 3558; at the expiration of which term, he either returned to Babylon to give an account of the state of the province of Judea, or else retired into a private station in his own country; co-operating, doubtless, in the pious designs of Nehemiah, his successor, by whom he is related soon after to have produced and read the law of Moses to the people. Ezra indeed appears to have

been particularly well skilled in the law, to have given much attention to the study of the Scriptures, and to have been well versed in the interpretation of them. He styles himself a ready scribe, and professes to have prepared himself to instruct the people in the statutes of God: the tradition, therefore, of his having made a collection of the sacred writings is extremely probable. We know indeed from Josephus, that the Jewish priests after every important war were accustomed, on the establishment of peace, both at home and abroad publicly to ascertain, recognize, and copy out the registers of the priesthood, by which we must either understand the Scriptures, or believe that the same practice prevailed as to them.

Ezra was a most useful person to the Jews, who reverence his memory with a regard almost equal to that which they entertain for Moses. He is not particularly styled a prophet in Scripture; but our Saviour makes no distinction between the authors of the sacred books, except that of "Moses and the Prophets." He was undoubtedly an appointed minister of God; and he wrote under the influence of the Holy Spirit, or his book would not have been admitted into the Hebrew canon, or received as sacred from the earliest ages of the Christian church. He is reported by some traditionary accounts to have died in the one hundred and twentieth year of his age, and to have been buried at Jerusalem; though others say that he died in Persia, and was buried on the banks of the river Semura; where his tomb is shewn.

It was during the captivity of the Jews, and

their consequent dispersion among the inhabitants of the most illustrious empire in the civilized world, that God principally employed them as the means of exciting the attention of the heathen to his majesty and his providence. By the prophetic denunciations of Jeremiah, which were so public and decided as to attract the notice of the Assyrian army and their mighty monarch, Jer. xxxix. xl. the captivity of Judah glorified God amongst the heathen, even at its commencement. But, during its continuance, God employed various means to convince the Gentiles of his universal providence, and his resistless power. He raised up Daniel, whose prophetic spirit exalted him to the highest distinction under Nebuchadnezzar, and Darius the Mede: he rescued the three illustrious friends of Daniel from the burning fiery furnace, into which they were plunged as martyrs for the worship of Jehovah, in opposition to the profanations of idolatry. He preserved Daniel himself from the den of lions, to which he was condemned for the same glorious cause, and punished the proud impiety of Nebuchadnezzar by a seven years' insanity and degradation from his throne, to which he was restored, only when with the return of his reason he became pious, and submitted to pay solemn and public homage to the God of Israel. Thus also, at the moment when Belshazzar was insulting Jehovah, by bringing forth the consecrated vessels of his temple to be polluted by his profanation, the miraculous hand-writing on the wall mixed with horror his impious revelling, and announced his own impending destruction, and the downfall of his empire.

These were not obscure or doubtful transactions; but, attested by the authentic decrees of the most distinguished monarchs, were solemnly proclaimed through their wide extended dominions: particularly in the instances of Nebuchadnezzar, Dan. iii. 29; iv. 1, 37; and of Darius, Dan. vi. 25. And, to crown this series of miraculous interpositions on the one hand, and of public homage to the majesty of Jehovah on the other, from the most distinguished monarchs of the eastern world, the great Cyrus, founder of the Persian empire, was so fully persuaded of that divine providence, whose spirit had dictated the prophecies, pointing out so clearly the progress, nay the particular mode of his successes, that he became the active assistant in the restoration of the chosen people to their country. These solemn and public testimonies to the majesty of the God of Israel, must have contributed materially to check error and idolatry, in a country where the form of the government rendered the examples and opinions of the monarchs so powerful and operative. They must have gained to the Jews, even in their captive and degraded state, much consideration and attention: and, as such a state led them to take pride in their religious superiority, the only superiority now left to them, and to exalt the divine original and the wisdom of their religion, so these events must have given weight and credibility to these representations.

THE BOOK OF NEHEMI

THE book of Nehemiah being subjoin
Hebrew canon to that of Ezra as a conti
his history, was often considered as his v
in the Latin and Greek Bibles it is called
book of Ezra; but it undoubtedly was w
Nehemiah, for he professes himself the a
in the beginning, and uniformly speaks i
person.

Ezra appears to have continued near te
the government of Judea, after the reform
mentions in the last chapter of his book;
probably in his endeavours to restore reli
to promote the prosperity of his country.
stances were however so unfavourable a
to his designs, that in the twentieth year
erxes Longimanus, about the year of
3558, we find, from Nehemiah, that repre
were made to him at Babylon of the affl
of the Jews, and of the ruinous conditic
city, of which the walls were yet unrepai

This book begins with an account of N
grief at this report; of his application to
for permission to visit and rebuild
"the place of his fathers' sepulchres."
then relates his departure and arrival at
with authority; feelingly describes th
state of Jerusalem, and his exertions to
dismantled walls. He records the name
patriotic men who assisted him on this

the conspiracy of the Ammonites, and other e
mies, against the work, and the defeat of th
designs. After the finishing of the walls and t
tifications, Nehemiah applied himself to other pu
lic objects. The scarcity of the inhabitants in
large city of Jerusalem first excited his attenti
He fortunately at this time found a register of th
persons who returned from the captivity un
Zerubbabel; which he repeats in the seventh ch
ter, in order to complete the restoration of th
possessions to the respective tribes, and to prov
that none but the Levites and descendants of Aa
might officiate in the service of the temple, and
the priesthood. Nehemiah then describes the pub
reading of the law to the people; the celebrati
of the feast of tabernacles, and other religi
appointments, observed with a pathetic commen
ration and thanksgiving for God's former merci
as described in preceding books of Scripture. Th
follows an account of the renewal of the coven
of obedience and respect to God's law, recor
as a memorial, with the names of those who sig
it; also a catalogue of those who were appoin
by lot, or consented to live at Jerusalem, wh
was surrounded by hostile neighbours; and
book concludes with a description of the refor
tion, both civil and religious, which Nehem
effected.

THE BOOK OF ESTHER.

THIS book is in the Hebrew styled "the Volume of Esther." It was received into the Jewish canon with particular veneration; and esteemed above many of the prophetic books, probably because therein are described the origin and ceremonies of the feast of Purim. It is called the book of Esther, because it contains the history of this Jewish captive, who, by her remarkable accomplishments, gained the affections of Ahasuerus; and by a marriage with him was raised to the throne of Persia. The author of the book is not certainly known. Some of the Fathers suppose it to have been written by Ezra; others contend that it was composed by Joachim, high priest of the Jews, and grandson of Josedech. The Talmudists attribute it to the joint labours of the great synagogue, which succeeded Ezra in the superintendence of the canon of Scripture. The twentieth verse of the ninth chapter of the book has led others to believe that Mordecai was the author; but what is there related to have been written by him, seems only to refer to the circular letter which he distributed. There are, lastly, other writers, who maintain that the book was the production of Esther's and Mordecai's united industry; and probably they may have communicated an account of events so interesting to the whole nation to the great synagogue at Jerusalem, some of the members of which may with great reason be supposed to have digested the infor-

mation thus received into its present form. We have, however, no sufficient evidence to determine, nor is it, perhaps, of much importance to ascertain precisely, who was the author: but that the book contains a genuine and faithful description of what did actually happen, is certain, not only from its admission into the canon, but also from the institution of the feast of Purim, which from its first establishment has been regularly observed as an annual solemnity, on the fourteenth and fifteenth of the month Adar, in commemoration of the great deliverance which Esther, by her interest, had procured; and which is even now celebrated among the Jews with many peculiar ceremonies, and with rejoicings even to intoxication. This festival was called Purim, or the feast of lots (Pur in the Persian language signifying a lot), from the events mentioned in chap. iii. 7; ix. 24.

The book describes the advancement of Esther; who, by the interest which she conciliated with Ahasuerus, delivered the Jews from a great destruction which had been contrived for them by Haman, an insolent favourite of the king. It presents an interesting description of mortified pride, and of malice baffled to the destruction of its contrivers. It likewise exhibits a very lively representation of the vexations and troubles, of the anxieties, treachery, and dissimulation of a corrupt court. The manners are painted with great force and fidelity; and the vicissitudes and characters are displayed with dramatic effect. The author seems to have been so intimately acquainted with the Persian customs, that some have conceived a notion that he

transcribed his work from the Persian chronicl
It has been remarked, that the name of God is 1
mentioned throughout the book; his superintend
providence is however frequently illustrated; it
shewn, indeed, in every part of the work, disc
certing evil designs, and producing great events
means seemingly inadequate.

Respecting the time when the events recorded
this history took place, there has been great diff
ence of opinion among learned men. We are to
chap. i. 1, that the events happened in the reign
Ahasuerus king of Persia, who "reigned fr
India, even to Ethiopia, over one hundred a
twenty-seven provinces:" and this extent of don
nion plainly proves that he was one of the su
cessors of Cyrus; but it is by no means agre
who is the person here meant by Ahasuerus, a nar
which does not occur in profane history. Arc
bishop Usher supposes that by Ahasuerus is mea
Darius Hystaspes, who began to reign B. C. 52
and agreeably to this supposition, the dates of t
several events are given in the margin of our Bibl
Scaliger contends that Xerxes is meant; and vario
authors of high authority maintain that Artaxer
Longimanus, who began to reign B. C. 464, is t
Ahasuerus here mentioned. Dean Prideaux h
very satisfactorily shewn that by Ahasuerus we a
to understand Artaxerxes Longimanus. Joseph
also considered Ahasuerus and Artaxerxes to be t
same person; and we may observe that Ahasuer
is always translated Artaxerxes in the Greek ve
sion, and he is called by that name in the Apocr
phal part of the book of Esther. Upon the

authorities, we place the commencement of this history about the year B. C. 460, and it continues through a space not exceeding twenty years.

The Jews from the time of the captivity are no more to be looked upon as that free, rich, and glorious people, which they had been either under their former theocracy, as Josephus rightly terms it, or under their opulent and warlike monarchs, and the direction of their prophets. Their condition, government, manners, their very name, and every thing but their religion, are now entirely changed. And indeed it could hardly be expected otherwise, when we consider, that those that had been carried away into Babylon, were sold for slaves, and dispersed far and wide through that vast empire, according to the custom of those conquerors; and though some of them we find to have attained to very considerable posts, or grown exceeding rich in the land of their captivity, yet these are but few in comparison of those who groaned under the heavy hand of their oppressors: neither were they the former, but the latter, that is, the poorer sort, that came back into Judea; and even of these the whole number that came, either with Zerubbabel, Ezra, or Nehemiah, scarcely amounted to seventy thousand; among whom a multitude of strangers was likewise intermixed, either by marriages, or otherwise, most of them so indigent, that they were forced to be supported in their journey by the charitable contributions of those that stayed behind.

They were indeed to be governed by their own laws; but, as they still continued in subjection to other nations, to the Persians, Syrians, and Romans, that privilege, as well as the exercise of their religion, very much depended on the arbitrary will of their conquerors, and was often curtailed, and sometimes wholly taken away. Even whilst they were under the Persians, the lives and estates of the whole nation were on the brink of being sacrificed to the ambition of a favourite Haman, had not Esther's interest miraculously prevented the execution of that bloody edict; and so weak did they continue under them, that they were a long time exposed to the injuries of even the neighbouring Samaritans. They seem however to have recovered themselves by degrees, and to have lived in more peace and plenty during the two following centuries; and this is perhaps the reason of that vast chasm of near two hundred and fifty years in their history, between the death of Nehemiah and the times of the Maccabees, when those illustrious heroes not only shook off the foreign yoke, but raised the glory of their nation by their victories and conquests, and by obliging other nations to embrace the Jewish religion.

But this epocha was but short-lived, and eighty years were hardly expired, before the ungovernable ambition of some of their unworthy successors introduced a general apostasy, and brought them under subjection to the Romans, which they could never more shake off. Herod indeed, whom the Romans raised to the royal dignity, greatly increased the glory and opulence of the Jewish nation; but

as he was an Idumean who had gained the crown by the destruction of the Asmonean race, as he was a vassal to the Romans, and a tyrant of the Jews, they could not be said to be either free or happy during his hateful reign, much less under the reigns of his successors, when the government of Judea was split into so many toparchies: so that the nation went from thenceforward from bad to worse, till their total destruction. They were changed in their very name, the title of Israelites being quite lost, and the names of all the other tribes being absorbed in that of Judah; so that, from the period of their return, the whole people were chiefly known by the name of Jews, in opposition to the Samaritans, who were a mixture partly of the ten tribes, partly of revolted Jews, and of other nations. Religion was the thing that received the least change from their re-establishment; and, if we except some apostasies, occasioned by persecutions, or the ambition of some of their high priests, we shall find them in the sequel more averse to idolatry, and to all heathenish superstitions, than ever their forefathers had been prone to them before the captivity; such strict observers of the sabbath, as to suffer themselves to be murdered by whole armies, rather than violate it by standing on their defence; in a word, so zealous for their religion, and such strict observers of their oaths, whether of allegiance or confederacy, as to suffer the most bloody persecutions, and horrid butcheries, with the utmost courage and constancy, rather than violate their fidelity to their laws. This was indeed a virtue, which, as

Josephus rightly observes, was peculiar to the Jews, and to which no other nation or religion could ever lay any claim, till the sufferings, number, and constancy of the Christian martyrs, did in a great measure eclipse the glory of the Jewish ones.

The Jews had many revolutions of peace and war, and some changes in the mode of their government, from the time of their return from the Babylonian captivity, to their complete subjection to the Romans; but their sacerdotal government, as it is sometimes called, continued with but little interruption through this whole space of about six hundred years. Having returned into their own country under the sanction and authority of Cyrus, they acknowledged the sovereignty of the kings of Persia till that empire was overturned by Alexander the Great (according to Dean Prideaux, B. C. 330): they then became subject to his successors, first in Egypt, afterwards in Syria, till, having been deprived of their civil and religious liberties for three years and a half by Antiochus Epiphanes (B. C. 168), they were restored, both to the exercise of their religion, and to their ancient independence, by the piety and bravery of Mattathias and his descendants (B. C. 165). Under these Maccabean princes, they became an entirely free state, supported by good troops, strong garrisons, and alliances, not only with neighbouring powers, but with remote kingdoms, even Rome itself. This glory of the Jews was but of short duration: for, though the decline of the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria prevented their interference in the affairs of other states, yet the

entire ruin of these two kingdoms, by the great accession of power which it brought to the Romans, paved the way for the destruction of the Jewish commonwealth. Pompey compelled the Jews to submit to the arms of Rome (B. C. 63), and from that time their country was tributary to the Romans, although it was still governed by Maccabean princes. The last of that family was conquered and deposed by Herod the Great, an Idumean by birth, but of the Jewish religion (B. C. 37), who had been appointed king of the Jews by the Romans, and enjoyed a long reign over the whole of Palestine, in the course of which he greatly diminished the civil power of the high priests. He was succeeded in the government of the greater part of Palestine by his son Archelaus (B. C. 3), whose misconduct caused Augustus to banish him, and to reduce his dominions into the form of a Roman province (A. C. 8). And thus it appears, that, with the exception of the short predicted period of Antiochus Epiphanes, the kingdom of Judah, for some time independent, but generally tributary, continued to enjoy its own religion, and the form of its civil government, till after the birth of the Messiah.

In the periods which succeed, we find the Jews placed in a different situation from any preceding part of their history. While a sufficient portion of the nation had been restored to Judea, and there settled, to answer the primary purpose of forming a separate people, in order to preserve the law and the prophets, rebuild the temple, and prepare the scene where the Messiah was personally to appear,

where he was to verify the prophecies, particularly with respect to his descent, the place of his birth, and the minutest circumstances of his personal character and sufferings; where he was to promulgate his religion, and lay down his life for man; another great body of the nation, as we are informed by Josephus, retired into Egypt, built a temple there, publicly exercised their religion, and flourished in such multitudes, under the protection of Alexander and his successors, that the Jews in Egypt nearly, if not entirely, equalled those of Judea in number, wealth, and influence; and at the same time adopted the Grecian language so universally, that it became necessary to translate the Scriptures into Greek for their use, and thus make them accessible to the learned and inquisitive in every country, whenever their attention should be excited to this study. It should be remarked too, that so necessary was such an adjustment of circumstances to produce this salutary effect, in opposition to the exclusive temper of the Jews settled in Judea, that this translation, which must have been received with such joy by the Jewish colonies, was regarded as the subject of national mourning by the Jews at Jerusalem.

The importance of this translation was extremely great. By it the grand truths of religion, the history of divine providence, and the prophecies announcing the Messiah, became accessible to the learned and inquisitive in every part of the then civilized world. All possibility of either questioning the existence, or falsifying the contents o those prophecies was thus precluded, and th

stability of this signal proof of revelation secured; though the rulers, doctors, and priests of that nation, with whom they had been originally deposited, rejected that divine personage whom these prophecies announced; and must therefore have wished, had it been in their power, to alter their contents in order to disprove their application.

About the time when this translation was completed, we see the Ptolemies collecting the celebrated library at Alexandria, which for such a length of time formed the greatest depository of learning in the world, and which was so much admired and imitated by other princes. And the circumstance of its being formed in the very same city with the most numerous colony of the Jews in Egypt, while it must have attracted thither all foreigners who were solicitous to acquire learning, must also have given them an opportunity of observing a form of religion so singular as that which the Jews maintained, and of inquiring into its principles and origin; an inquiry which the translation of the Scriptures into Greek rendered practicable; while the cessation of prophecy amongst the Jews, soon after their restoration from captivity, closed the canon of the Jewish Scriptures, and proved that the knowledge which that translation could supply was perfect and complete.

The same providential system of preparation for the introduction of a pure and universal religion was equally conspicuous in many other gradual movements in the world, all concurring to promote

the same effect. The inquisitive and vainglorious turn of the Grecian character multiplied philosophic sects, which by their perpetual disputations directed the attention of mankind to religious and moral speculations, gradually undermined the influence, by exposing the absurdity, of Pagan superstition and idolatry; and, though they did not substitute in their room any perfect system of natural religion, yet many of its great truths were occasionally debated upon with spirit and subtilty; and, though they were not clearly proved or practically inculcated, they yet became the objects of general interest and curiosity: so that the want of further information, and above all, of divine instruction, which might remove men's doubts and errors on these most awful subjects, was felt and acknowledged by the most sagacious and reflecting minds; and therefore such instruction would be more attentively listened to, and more thankfully and joyfully received.

Connected with the same system, and tending to promote the same effect, was the great and permanent extension of the Roman empire, which broke down all the barriers of separation between the eastern and western worlds, united the Euphrates and the Thame under the same masters, and blended all the civilized states of Greece and Asia, of Africa and Europe, in one great community; in every part of which the Grecian language, now the language of the sacred records, became as it were the common tongue of the learned and polite; while a perpetual intercourse between the various parts of this mighty empire,

the establishment of a firm and regular police through its whole extent, and, above all, that universal peace, which its undisputed ascendency secured through the entire civilized world, when the gospel of peace was first promulgated; all these circumstances secured to the teachers of that gospel ready access to all the nations of the world capable of profiting by the sacred truths they taught, and gave men leisure to consider their unspeakable importance, and examine the evidence to which they appealed.

JOB.

The celebrated Patriarch, whose history is recorded in the following book, has been represented by some sacred critics as imaginary, and his book as a fictitious dramatic composition. But he was evidently considered as real by the Prophet Ezekiel, who ranks Noah, Daniel, and Job together, as powerful intercessors with God; the first for his family, the second for the wise men of Babylon, and the third for his friends, Ezek. xiv. 14. And the Apostle James celebrates the exemplary "patience of Job," James v. 11. And the book itself, the early admission of which into the sacred canon is strongly in favour of its veracity, describes the residence of Job and his friends with all the geographical precision of true history.

The Book of Job was certainly written as a literal relation of actual events; for this is evident from the style of the author, from his mode of

introducing the subject, and also from the circumstantial detail of habitation, kindred, and condition, as well as from the names of the persons therein mentioned, which correspond with other accounts of the age and country, in which Job is generally supposed to have existed.

It must be observed, that the veracity of the book is not invalidated by the allegorical manner in which some things are related. Human events are literally described; but the proceedings of Providence, of which we are unable to form any apprehension, unless from figurative illustration, are perhaps here, as in other parts of Scripture, parabolically represented under familiar allusions.

When Job lived, seems deducible from his being contemporary with Eliphaz the Temanite; thus:

		Abraham	
1.		Isaac	1.
2.	Esau	Jacob	2.
3.	Eliphaz	Levi	3.
4.	Teman	Kohath	4.
5.	Eliphaz, Temanite	Amram Job	5.
-	- - - - - - -	Moses - - -	

It appears probable that Job himself was the writer of his own story: of whose inspiration we seem to have very clear evidence in this book: namely, from those remarkable words of his to God, chap. xlii. 5, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee."

None could tell us his own story so well as Job; nor have we any reason to question his veracity. The dialogue too will then appear to have been the substance of a real conversation, as no dialogue was ever more natural. If the story be told us in verse, or in the prophetic style and language; as the first of these was a practice of the highest antiquity, the other adds the most sacred and unquestionable authority to it: so that neither truth nor ornament is here wanting, any more than the dignity of the subject, to render this a book of inestimable value.

The other advantage is this: that if Job himself were the writer of the book, then every point of history, and every doctrine of religion here treated of, which coincide with those delivered in the books of Moses, are an additional proof and confirmation of these latter; as being evidently derived from some other source, not borrowed from the Pentateuch.

But whether we suppose Job the author of the book or not, its great antiquity, and even its priority to the age of Moses, seems to stand on strong grounds. And, upon the whole, perhaps we may not unreasonably conjecture the history of the book to be this.—The poem being originally written either by Job, or some contemporary of his, and existing in the time of Moses, might fall into his hands, whilst residing in the land of Midian, or afterwards when in the neighbourhood of Idumea; and might naturally be made use of by him, to represent to the Hebrews, either whilst repining under their Egyptian bondage, or mur-

muring at their long wanderings in the wilderness, the great duty of submission to the will of God. The encouragement which the book holds out, that every good man, suffering patiently, will finally be rewarded, rendered it a work peculiarly calculated to minister mingled comfort and rebuke to the distressed and discontented Israelites, and which might therefore well have been employed by Moses for this purpose. We may also suppose that Moses, in transcribing, might have made some small and unimportant alterations, which will sufficiently account for occasional and partial resemblances of expression between it and the Pentateuch, if any such there be.

The general conduct of this book, as a poem, is of the most interesting kind. It opens with a preface, which describes the person, and advantageous situation of a most worthy and excellent man, called by some a king: then it relates by what means he was deprived of these blessings, and reduced to distresses proportionate to his former prosperity: it describes certain of his former friends as visiting him, and endeavouring to excite his repentance for some secret sins, as they suppose, committed by him; while he protests his innocence of any such guilt. After many charges and vindications between the elder and perhaps more dignified friends of Job, and the patriarch himself, a person, younger than those friends who had already spoken, then assumes the discourse, and gradually prepares the way for an appearance of the Deity himself, who reasons on the various works of his creating hand, and the

various course of his providence in respect to them, all of which exceed the ability, conception, or direction, of the human mind: leaving the inference, that he, who thus wisely, though diversely, directs the course of nature, does equally wisely, though equally diversely, direct the ways of good men, who trust in him.

The poem consists of five parts: the first part, containing the first dialogue, or debate between Job and his three friends, occupies chap. iii.—xiv.; the second, chap. xv.—xxi.; the third, chap. xxii. —xxxi.; the fourth part contains the speech of Elihu, chap. xxxii.—xxxvii.; and the fifth, the answer of God, and Job's submission, chap. xxxviii. —xlii.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

The book of Psalms, that is, the book of Hymns, or praises of the Lord, contains the productions of different writers. These productions are called the Psalms of David, because a great part of them were composed by him. Some of them were perhaps penned before, and some after, the time of David; but all of them by persons under the influence of the Holy Ghost, since all were judged worthy to be inserted into the canon of sacred writ. Ezra probably collected them into one book, and placed them in the order which they now preserve. It appears that the hundred and fifty Psalms therein contained were selected from a much greater number, which, it may be presumed, were not suggested by the Holy Spirit. The authority of those, which

we now possess, is established, not only by their rank among the sacred writings, and by the unvaried testimony of every age, but likewise by many intrinsic proofs of inspiration. Not only do they breathe through every part a divine spirit of eloquence, but they contain numberless illustrious prophecies that were remarkably accomplished, and that are frequently appealed to by the evangelical writers. The sacred character of the whole book is established by the testimony of our Saviour and his Apostles; who in various parts of the New Testament apply the predictions of the Psalms as obviously apposite to the circumstances of their lives, and as expressly intended to describe them.

The Psalms are certainly not arranged with any regard to chronology. Nor are the titles prefixed to them always designed to point out the author, but often apply to the persons appointed to set them to music. They likewise sometimes appear to be only names of instruments, or directions for the choice of tunes.

Moses may be considered as the first composer of sacred hymns; all nations seem afterwards to have adopted this mode of expressing their religious sentiments, and to have employed hymns in celebrating the praises of their respective objects of worship, on the idea, derived perhaps from revealed truth, that they were acceptable to the divine nature. The composition of sacred hymns was carried to great excellence by succeeding prophets, but was improved to its highest perfection under David, who, if he did not introduce, certainly established the custom of singing them in the public

service, with alternate interchange of verse, as in our cathedral service. And the practice of Psalmody received the sanction of Christ and his Apostles, who themselves recommended the custom by their precept and example.

The version of the Psalms in our Bible, which was made by the translators employed under king James the first, is posterior to that printed in our prayer books, which was executed in 1539. This last, as very excellent and familiarized by custom, was retained in the liturgy, though, being translated chiefly from the Greek, with some variation in conformity to the Hebrew, it does not so exactly correspond with the original, as does that in our Bibles.

The interesting life of David, who was the principal composer of the Book of Psalms, is described with peculiar minuteness in the historical books of Scripture; and many of his Psalms are so characteristic of the circumstances under which they were composed, that there cannot be a more engaging task, than that of tracing their connexion with the events of his history; of discovering the occasions on which they were severally produced, and of contemplating the feeling and descriptive sentiments which they contain. If in the successive scenes of his life we behold him active in the exercise of those virtues which his piety produced, we contemplate him in this Book of Psalms in a no less attractive point of view. We here find him a sincere servant of God, divested of all the pride of royalty; pouring out the emotions of his soul, and unfolding his pious sentiment in every vicissitude

of condition. At one time we have the prayers of distress; at another, the praises and exultation of triumph. Hence are these Psalms admirably adapted to all the circumstances of life, and serve alike for the indulgence of joy, or the soothing of sorrow; they chase away despondence and affliction; and furnish gladness with the strains of holy and religious rapture.

Although David's main purpose in publishing these divine hymns, setting them to suitable music, and singing them in the public worship of God, was to publish to the whole world his endless gratitude for the various and wonderful mercies of God bestowed upon him; yet had he a further, and, if possible, a nobler purpose, that of dispersing true religion throughout every part of his dominions; of inspiring the hearts of his people with a true and lively sense of gratitude to God, their benefactor, protector, and Saviour. David well knew, that true gratitude to God is the surest source of true religion, and of every duty enjoined by it: and that, when it is poured out for public blessings, in which all partake, it naturally mixes with every social affection, and blends them, as it were, into its own being; and by these means becomes the very best bond of society. Therefore, by perpetually pouring out the praises of God in the most exalted and heavenly compositions, and taking all occasions to recount his endless mercies and deliverances wrought for his people from the beginning, he took the most effectual means to fill their hearts with gratitude to their great benefactor; and, in consequence of that, to render them religiously observant of his

laws; to make them humane, friendly, and affectionate to one another, and conscientiously faithful and dutiful to their sovereign.

The Psalms are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purpose of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world; the dispensations of providence, and the economy of grace; the transactions of the patriarchs, the exodus of the children of Israel; their journey through the wilderness, and their settlement in Canaan; their law, priesthood, and ritual; the exploits of their great men wrought through faith; their sins and captivities, their repentances and restorations; the sufferings and victories of David; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon; the advent of the Messiah with its effects and consequences; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, and priesthood; the effusion of the Spirit, the conversion of the Gentiles, the rejection of the Jews; the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian church; the end of the world, the general judgment, the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and king.

The Jews, at some uncertain period, divided the Book of Psalms into five sections or books, probably in imitation of the division of the Pentateuch. These divisions end respectively with the forty-first, the seventy-second, the eighty-ninth, the one hundred and sixth, and the one hundred and fiftieth. The four first books of this division terminate with the word Amen, and with a peculiar form of doxo-

logy, or praise to God, which was probably, in each instance, added by the collector of the Book of Psalms. Our present order of the Psalms is perhaps that, in which they were sung in the temple; and this may account for the occasional repetitions.

THE PROVERBS.

The Proverbs, as we are informed at the beginning, and in other parts of the Book, were written, for the most part, by Solomon, the son of David; a man, as the sacred writings assure us, peculiarly endued with divine wisdom. Whatever ideas of his superior understanding we may be led to form by the particulars recorded of his judgment and attainments, we shall find them amply justified on perusing the works which remain, and give testimony of his abilities. This enlightened monarch, being desirous of employing the wisdom which he had received to the advantage of mankind, produced several works for their instruction. Of these, however, three only were admitted into the canon of sacred writ by Ezra; the others being either not designed for religious instruction, or so mutilated by time and accident, as to have been judged imperfect. The Book of Proverbs, that of Ecclesiastes, and that of the Song of Solomon, are all that remain of the writings of him, who is related to have spoken "three thousand proverbs," whose "songs were a thousand and five," and who "spake of trees from the cedar that is in Lebanon,

even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall;" who "spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes." If, however, many valuable compositions of Solomon have perished, we have reason to be grateful for what still remains. Of his Proverbs and Songs the most excellent have been providentially preserved.

This Book of Proverbs contains the maxims of long experience, framed by one who was well calculated, by his rare qualities and endowments, to draw just lessons from a comprehensive survey of human life. Solomon judiciously sums up his precepts in brief energetic sentences, which are well contrived for popular instruction. The wisdom, indeed, of all ages, from the highest antiquity, hath chosen to compress its lessons into compendious sentences, which are peculiarly adapted to the simplicity of earlier times; which are readily conceived and easily retained; and which circulate in society as useful principles, to be unfolded and applied as occasion may require. The inspired son of David had the power of giving peculiar energy and weight to this style of writing, and his works have been as it were the storehouse from which posterity hath drawn its best maxims. His proverbs are so justly founded on principles of human nature, and so adapted to the permanent interests of man, that they agree with the manners of every age, and may be assumed as rules for the direction of our conduct in every condition and rank of life, however varied in its complexion, or diversified by circumstances; they embrace not only the concerns of private morality, but the great objects of political

importance. The book may be considered under five divisions. The first part, which is a kind of preface, extends to the tenth chapter. This contains general cautions and exhortations from a teacher to his pupil, delivered in very various and elegant language; duly connected in its parts, illustrated with beautiful descriptions, decorated with all the ornaments of poetical composition, and well contrived as an engaging introduction to awaken and interest the attention. The second part extends from the beginning of the tenth chapter to the seventeenth verse of the twenty-second chapter, and contains what may strictly and properly be called Proverbs, given in unconnected general sentences with much neatness and simplicity; adapted to the instruction of youth, and probably more immediately designed by Solomon for the improvement of his son. In the third part, which contains what is included between the sixteenth verse of the twenty-second chapter and the twenty-fifth chapter, the tutor is supposed, for a more lively effect, to address his pupil as present; he drops the sententious style of proverbs, and communicates exhortations in a more continued and connected strain.

This book is frequently quoted by the Apostles, who considered it as a treasure of revealed morality, from which Christians were to derive their rules of conduct; and the canonical authority of no part of the Old Testament is so ratified by the evidence of quotations as that of the Proverbs

ECCLESIASTES;

OR, THE PREACHER.

THE Book of Ecclesiastes is called in Hebrew "*Coheleth*," a word which signifies one who speaks in public; and which indeed is properly translated by the Greek word Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher. It is unquestionably the production of Solomon, who for the great excellency of his instructions is emphatically styled, "the Preacher:" for the writer of it styles himself, "the son of David, king of Jerusalem," chap. i. 1.; he describes too his wisdom, his riches, his writings, and his works, in a manner which is applicable only to Solomon; and by all tradition, Jewish and Christian, the book is attributed to him. It is said by the Jews to have been written by him, upon his awakening to repentance, after he had been seduced, in the decline of life, to idolatry and sin; and, if this be true, it affords valuable proofs of the sincerity with which he regretted his departure from righteousness.

The main scope and tendency of the book have been variously represented by different writers. It may be considered as a kind of inquiry into the chief good; an inquiry conducted on sound principles, and terminating in a conclusion which all on mature reflection will approve. The great object of Solomon appears to have been, from a comprehensive consideration of the circumstances of human life, to demonstrate the vanity of all

secular pursuits. He endeavours to illustrate, l
a just estimate, the insufficiency of earthly enjo
ment; not with design to excite in us a disgust
life, but to influence us to prepare for that sta
where there is no vanity. With this view, tl
Preacher affirms, that man's labour, as far as
has respect only to present objects, is vain ar
unprofitable; that however prosperous and fla
tering circumstances may appear, yet, as he cou
from experience assert, neither knowledge, n
pleasure, nor magnificence, nor greatness, n
uncontrolled indulgence, can satisfy the desires
man; that the solicitude with which some m
toil and heap up possessions for descendants oft
unworthy, is especial vexation; that it is bett
far to derive those enjoyments from the gifts
providence which they were designed to furnis
by being rendered subservient to good actions.

The doctrine of a future retribution forms tl
great basis, and the leading truth, of this boo
In it, the royal Preacher expatiates on the transito
condition of mankind, if considered as confined
the present state of existence; the vanity ar
vexation of spirit attending all present hums
enjoyment, which his own experience had
abundantly proved: the apparent inequality
Providence (except under the Jewish dispensation
by which there appears one event to the righteo
and to the wicked. But in all the difficulties ar
perplexities, all that vanity and vexation of spiri
which this partial view of human nature implie
the royal Preacher brings forward the prospect
a future life and just retribution, as the solutio

and the remedy, the consolation and the cure. See chap. iii. 17; viii. 11; xi. 9; xii. 14.

The book may be divided into two general parts; the first, comprising the six first chapters, in which Solomon shews that all things relating to this world only are vain and perishing, and therefore can afford no true, or solid, or lasting satisfaction or happiness; the second, comprising the six last chapters, in which he shews that piety is the only means by which we can attain true and lasting happiness.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON.

This book was written by Solomon, to whom it is expressly ascribed by the Hebrew title. It is almost universally allowed to have been a marriage song of that monarch, composed on the celebration of his nuptials with a very beautiful woman, called "the Shulamite," the daughter, as has been supposed, of Pharaoh, and the favourite and distinguished wife of Solomon.

Solomon was eminently skilled in the composition of songs, and he is related to have produced above one thousand, 1 Kings iv. 32; out of which number, probably, this alone was attributed to the suggestion of the Holy Spirit; for this alone has escaped the waste of time, by being preserved in the sacred volume, into which it was received as unquestionably authentic; and it has uniformly been considered as canonical by the Christian Church

The royal author appears, in the typical spirit of his time, to have designed to render a ceremonial appointment descriptive of a spiritual concern; and this song is accordingly considered by judicious writers to be a mystical allegory of that sort which induces a more sublime sense on historical truths, and which, by the description of human events, shadows out divine circumstances. The sacred writers were, by God's condescension, authorized to illustrate his strict and intimate relation to the church by the figure of a marriage; and the emblem must have been strikingly becoming and expressive to the conceptions of the Jews, since they annexed ideas of peculiar mystery to this appointment, and imagined that the marriage union was a counterpart representation of some original pattern in heaven. Hence it was performed among them with very peculiar ceremonies and solemnity, with every thing that could give dignity and importance to its rites. Solomon therefore, in celebrating the circumstances of his marriage, was naturally led, by a train of correspondent reflections, to consider that spiritual connexion which it was often employed to symbolize; and the idea must have been the more forcibly suggested to him, as he was at this period preparing to build a temple to God, and thereby to furnish a visible representation of the Hebrew Church. The spiritual allegory, thus worked up by Solomon to its highest perfection, was very consistent with the prophetic style, which was accustomed tc predict evangelical blessings by such parabolica figures; and Solomon was more immediately

furnished with a pattern for this representation by the author of the forty-fifth Psalm, who describes in a compendious allegory, the same future connexion between Christ and his Church.

This poem may be considered, as to its form, as a dramatical poem of the pastoral kind. There is a succession of time, and a change of place, to different parts of the palace and royal gardens. The persons introduced as speakers, are the bridegroom and bride, and their respective attendants. The interchange of dialogue is carried on in a wild and digressive manner, but the speeches are adapted to persons with appropriate elegance. The companions of the bride compose a kind of chorus, which seems to bear some resemblance to that afterwards adopted in the Grecian tragedy. Solomon and his queen assume the pastoral simplicity of style which is favourable to the communication of their sentiments. The poem abounds throughout with beauties, and presents every where a delightful and romantic display of nature, painted at its most interesting season, and described with every ornament that an inventive fancy could furnish. It is justly entitled A Song of Songs, or most excellent song, as being superior to any that an uninspired writer could have produced, and tending, if properly understood, to purify the mind, and to elevate the affections from earthly to heavenly things.

It was the practice of the Jews to forbid their children the reading of this book till their judgment was sufficiently matured; lest, in the fervour of youth, they should give too wide a scope to

fancy, and interpret to a bad sense the spiritual ideas of Solomon. This was a very prudent and judicious precaution; and may well serve to restrain the practice, which has unfortunately prevailed among some Christians of modern times, of applying in an indecorous manner the strong figurative expressions which occur throughout this poem.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION
TO
THE PROPHETS.

It is universally acknowledged, that the remaining books of the Old Testament, namely, the sixteen prophetical books, and the Lamentations of Jeremiah, were written by the persons whose names they bear. The Prophets profess themselves to be the respective authors of these books: and this internal testimony is confirmed both by Jewish and Christian tradition.

The Prophets were those illustrious persons who were raised up by God among the Israelites as the ministers of his dispensations. They flourished in a continued succession for above a thousand years (Luke i. 70.), reckoning from Moses to Malachi: all co-operating in the same designs, and conspiring in one spirit to deliver the same doctrines, and to prophesy concerning the same future blessings. Moses, the first and greatest of the Prophets, having established God's first covenant, those who followed him were em-

ployed in explaining its nature, in opening its spiritual meaning, in instructing the Jews, and in preparing them for the reception of that second dispensation which it prefigured. Their pretensions to be considered as God's appointed servants were demonstrated by the unimpeachable integrity of their characters; by the intrinsic excellence and tendency of their instructions; and by the disinterested zeal, and undaunted fortitude, with which they persevered in their great designs. These were still further confirmed by the miraculous proofs which they displayed of divine support, and by the immediate completion of many less important predictions which they uttered. Such were the credentials of their exalted character, which the Prophets furnished to their contemporaries: and we, who, having lived to witness the appearance of the second dispensation, can look back to the connexion which subsisted between the two covenants, have received additional evidence of the inspiration of the Prophets in the attestations of our Saviour and his Apostles; and in the retrospect of a germinant and gradually maturing scheme of prophecy, connected in all its parts, and ratified in the accomplishment of its great object, the coming of the Messiah. We have still farther incontrovertible proofs of their divine appointment in the numerous prophecies, which in these latter days are fulfilled, and still under our own eyes continue to receive their completion.

The prophetical writings present us with the worthiest and most exalted ideas of the Almighty; the justest and purest notions of piety and virtue;

the most awful denunciations against wickedness of every kind, public and private; the most affectionate expostulations, the most inviting promises, and the warmest concern for the public good. And, besides all this, they contain a series of predictions relating to our blessed Lord, in which all the remarkable circumstances of his birth, life, ministry, miracles, doctrines, sufferings, and death, are foretold in so minute and exact a manner (more particularly in the prophecy of Isaiah), that it might almost be thought they were describing all these things after they had happened, if it were not known, that these prophecies were confessedly written many hundred years before Christ came into the world; and were, during all that time, in the possession of the Jews, who were the mortal enemies of Christianity, and therefore would never set themselves to forge prophecies, which most evidently prove him to be what he professed to be, and what they denied him to be, the Messiah, and the Son of God. It is to this part of Scripture that our Lord particularly directs our attention, when he says, "Search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of me," John v. 39. No testimony can be more satisfactory and convincing than this, to any one that reads them with care and impartiality, and compares their predictions concerning our Saviour, with the history of his life given by those who constantly lived and conversed with him.

The language of the Prophets is remarkable for its magnificence. Each writer is distinguished for peculiar beauties; but their style in general may be characterized as strong, animated, and impres-

sive. Its ornaments are derived, not from accumulation of epithet, or laboured harmony, but from the real grandeur of its images, and the majestic force of its expressions. It is varied with striking propriety, and enlivened with quick but easy transitions. Its sudden bursts of eloquence, its earnest warmth, its affecting exhortations and appeals, afford very interesting proofs of that lively impression, and of that inspired conviction, under which the Prophets wrote, and which enabled them among a people, not distinguished for genius, to surpass in every variety of composition the most admired productions of pagan antiquity. If the imagery employed by the sacred writers appears sometimes to partake of a coarser nature, it must be recollected, that the eastern manners and languages required the most forcible representations; and that the masculine and indignant spirit of the Prophets led them to adopt the most energetic and descriptive expressions. No style is perhaps so highly figurative as that of the Prophets. Every object of nature and of art, which could furnish allusions, is explored with industry; every scene of creation, and every page of science, seems to have unfolded its rich varieties to the sacred writers, who in the spirit of eastern poetry delight in every kind of metaphorical embellishment.

It remains to be observed, that the greatest part of the prophetic books, as well as those more especially styled poetical, were written in some kind of measure or verse: this is evident, not only from the peculiar selection of unusual expressions and phrases, but also from the artificial arrangement and regular distribution of many sentences,

wnich run in parallel divisions, and correspond, as it were, in equal periods; but whether this resulted from the observance of certain definite numerical feet, or was regulated by the ear and the harmony of lines of similar cadence, is uncertain.

The Prophets probably collected their own prophecies into their present form; indisputably the prophecies were composed and published by those Prophets whose names they severally bear. As their genuine productions, they were received into the Jewish canon; and they were read in the Jewish synagogues after the persecution of Antiochus Epiphanes, when the reading of the law was interdicted; and they continued so to be read to the days of our Saviour, from whose time they have formed a part of the service in the Christian churches. They are with great propriety received into our churches as illustrating the grand scheme of prophecy, and as replete with the most excellent instruction of every kind. The predictions which they contain were principally accomplished in the appearance of Christ. Some, however, which referred to the dispersion and subsequent state of the Jews, as well as to the condition of other nations, still continue under our own eyes to be fulfilled, and will gradually receive their final and consummate ratification in the restoration of the Jews, in the universal establishment of Christ's kingdom, and in the second advent of our Lord, to "judge the world in righteousness."

The Prophets in their supposed order of time, arranged according to Blair's Tables.

	Before Christ.	Kings of Judah.	Kings of Israel.
Jonah . . .	Between 856 and 784		Jehu and Jehoahaz, according to Bishop Lloyd; but Joash and Jeroboam the second, according to Blair.
Amos . . .	——— 810 — 785	Uzziah, chap. i. 1.	Jeroboam the second, chap. i. 1.
Hosea . . .	——— 810 — 725	Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, the third year of Hezekiah.	Jeroboam the second, chap. i. 1.
Isaiah . . .	——— 810 — 698	Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, chap. i. 1. and perhaps Manasseh.	
Joel	——— 810 — 660 or probably later.	Uzziah, or possibly Manasseh.	
Micah . . .	——— 758 — 699	Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, chap. i. 1.	Pekah and Hoshea.
Nahum . .	——— 720 — 698	Probably towards the close of Hezekiah's reign.	
Zephaniah.	——— 640 — 602	In the reign of Josiah, chap. i. 1.	
Jeremiah. .	——— 628 — 586	In the thirteenth year of Josiah.	
Habakkuk.	——— 612 — 598	Probably in the reign of Jehoiakim.	
Daniel. . .	——— 606 — 534	During all the captivity.	
Obadiah . .	——— 588 — 583	Between the taking of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, and the destruction of the Edomites by him.	
Ezekiel . .	——— 595 — 536	During part of the captivity.	
Haggai . .	About 520 to 518	After the return from Babylon.	
Zechariah.	From 520 to 518 or longer.		
Malachi . .	Between 436 and 397		

ISAIAH.

Isaiah was of the tribe of Judah, and it is supposed that he was descended from a branch of the royal family. He was the earliest of the four great Prophets, and entered upon his prophetic office in the last year of Uzziah's reign, about seven hundred and fifty-eight years before Christ. It is uncertain how long he continued to prophesy: some have thought that he died in the fifteenth or sixteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, and in that case he prophesied about forty-five years: but it appears more probable that he was put to death by command of Manasseh, in the first year of his reign; in which case he prophesied more than sixty-one years. It is said that he was sawn asunder with a wooden saw: and that mode of his death is supposed to be alluded to in the Epistle to the Hebrews, chap. xi. 37.

The name of Isaiah is, as Vitringa has remarked in some measure descriptive of his character, since it signifies "the salvation of Jehovah." He has always been considered as a Prophet of the highest eminence, and looked up to as the brightest luminary of the Jewish church. He has been emphatically styled, "the Evangelical Prophet," so copiously and clearly does he describe the Messiah and characterize his kingdom; favoured, as it was with an intimate view of the gospel state, from

very birth of our Saviour to be "conceived of a virgin," to that glorious and triumphant period, when every Gentile nation shall bring a clean offering to the Lord, and "all flesh shall come to worship before him," chap. lxvi. 20, 23. The author of Ecclesiasticus, in his fine and discriminating encomium on the Prophets, says of Isaiah, that "he was great and faithful in his vision;" and that "in his time the sun went backward, and he lengthened the king's life. He saw by an excellent spirit what should come to pass at the last;" Ecclus. xlviii. 22, 25. It is certain that Isaiah, in addition to his other prophetic privileges, was invested on some particular occasions with the power of performing miracles, 2 Kings xx. 11; 2 Chron. xxxii. 31. It is remarkable, that his wife is styled a prophetess, chap. viii. 3. He himself appears to have been raised up, as a striking object of veneration among the Jews; and to have regulated his whole conduct in subserviency to his sacred appointment. His sons likewise were for types and figurative pledges of God's assurances, chap. viii. 18; and their names and actions were intended to awaken a religious attention in the persons whom they were commissioned to address and to instruct, chap. vii. 3; viii. 1.

Though Isaiah gives so copious and circumstantial an account of the promised Messiah, and his kingdom, that he has been emphatically called "the Evangelical Prophet," his book is not confined to prophecies relative to our Saviour: it contains many other predictions, and likewise several historical relations. It may be considered under six

general divisions. The first division consists of the first five chapters, containing a general description of the state and condition of the Jews in the several periods of their history, the promulgation of the Gospel, and the coming of Christ to judgment. The second division consists of the seven next chapters, containing in the seventh the promise to Ahaz, which was predictive of Christ, whose nature, birth, and kingdom, are distinctly described in the ninth chapter: the denunciations of punishment upon the Assyrians, in the tenth chapter, seem an interruption to this glorious subject, which is resumed in the eleventh, where the Prophet breaks out into a hymn of praise, celebrating the future triumphant state of the church. The third division, which reaches from the thirteenth to the twenty-seventh chapter inclusive, begins with a very remarkable prophecy of the destruction of Babylon, which is considered as a type of Antichrist: it then describes the fate of the Jews, Assyrians, Moabites, Philistines, Arabians, Syrians, and Egyptians; and concludes in a manner similar to the last. The fourth division, which extends from the twenty-eighth to the thirty-fifth chapter inclusive, contains predictions relative to the then approaching invasion of Sennacherib: but it is interspersed with severe reproofs and threats against the Jews for disobedience and wilful blindness, and also with consolatory promises to those who should remain faithful in the service of God, alluding frequently to the times of the Gospel. The thirty-sixth and two following chapters, which constitute the fifth division, give an historical

account of the invasion of Sennacherib, and of the prolongation of Hezekiah's life. The sixth division reaches from the thirty-ninth chapter to the end of the book: here the Prophet generally addresses his countrymen as being actually in the captivity which he had previously foretold; he predicts the total destruction of the empire of Babylon, and the restoration of the Jews to their own land by their great deliverer Cyrus, whom he represents the Almighty as calling upon by name to execute his will, about two hundred years before he was born. In this latter part of the book are principally contained the numerous prophecies already noticed, concerning the birth, ministry, death, and religion of Christ, together with a variety of circumstances, which were to precede and follow his incarnation.

In some of his prophecies concerning Christ and the Christian church, Isaiah is so particular, that his discourse in certain parts looks more like a history of things past, than a prediction of that which was to come. St. Jerome, who had often read him, and considered him very carefully, says, "he deserves the name of an Evangelist rather than of a Prophet:" and indeed he is more frequently quoted through the New Testament than any other of the Prophets. For this reason it is, that this book, by ancient and immemorial custom, is appointed to be read in our churches at a particular season of the year, as being the best preparative for the advent of our Lord, the foundation of the Evangelists and Apostles, the portraiture of the nature, person, and offices of the Messiah, and

of the great things which he hath done and suffered for us.

JEREMIAH.

The Prophet Jeremiah was of the sacerdotal race, being, as he records himself, one of the priests that dwelt at Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, a city appropriated out of that tribe to the use of the priests the sons of Aaron (Josh. xxi. 18.), and situate, as we learn from St. Jerome, about three miles north of Jerusalem. Some have supposed his father to have been that Hilkiah the high priest, by whom the book of the law was found in the temple in the reign of Josiah; but for this there is no better ground than his having borne the same name, which was no uncommon one among the Jews; whereas had he been in reality the high priest, he would doubtless have been mentioned by that distinguishing title, and not put upon a level with priests of an ordinary and inferior class.

Jeremiah appears to have been very young when he was called to the exercise of the prophetical office; from which he modestly endeavoured to excuse himself by pleading his youth and incapacity; but being overruled by the Divine authority, he set himself to discharge the duties of his function with unremitted diligence and fidelity during a period of at least forty-two years, reckoned from the thirteenth year of Josiah's

reign. In the course of his ministry he met with great difficulties and opposition from his countrymen of all degrees; whose persecution and ill usage sometimes wrought so far upon his mind as to draw from him expressions in the bitterness of his soul, which many have thought hard to reconcile with his religious principles; but which, when duly weighed, may be found to demand our pity for his unmerited sufferings, rather than our censure for any want of piety and reverence towards God. He was in truth a man of unblemished piety and conscientious integrity; a warm lover of his country, whose misery he pathetically deplores; and so affectionately attached to his countrymen, notwithstanding their injurious treatment of him, that he chose rather to abide with them, and undergo all hardships in their company, than separately to enjoy a state of ease and plenty, which the favour of the king of Babylon would have secured to him. At length, after the destruction of Jerusalem, being carried with the remnant of the Jews into Egypt, whither they had resolved to retire, though contrary to his advice, upon the murder of Gedaliah, whom the Chaldeans had left governor in Judea, he there continued warmly to remonstrate against their idolatrous practices, foretelling the consequences that would inevitably follow. But his freedom and zeal are said to have cost him his life; for the Jews at Tahpanhes, as tradition goes, took such offence thereat, that they stoned him to death; which account of the manner of his end, though not absolutely certain, is at

least very probable, considering the temper and disposition of the parties concerned. Their wickedness however did not long pass without its reward; for, in a few years after, they were miserably destroyed by the Babylonian armies, which invaded Egypt according to the Prophet's prediction, chap. xliv. 27, 28.

As to the style of Jeremiah, this Prophet is by no means wanting either in elegance or sublimity, although, generally speaking, inferior to Isaiah in both. His thoughts indeed are somewhat less elevated, and he is commonly more large and diffuse in his sentences; but the reason of this may be, that he is mostly taken up with the gentler passions of grief and pity, for the expression of which he has a peculiar talent. This is most evident in "the Lamentations," where those passions altogether predominate; but it is often visible also in his "Prophecies," in the former part of the book more especially, which is principally poetical; the middle parts are chiefly historical; but the last part, consisting of six chapters, is entirely poetical, and contains several oracles distinctly marked, in which this Prophet falls very little short of the lofty style of Isaiah.

LAMENTATIONS OF JEREMIAH.

The Lamentations of Jeremiah are very properly distributed into five chapters, each of them

containing a distinct elegy, consisting of twenty-two periods, according to the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet.

They were not composed till after the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, and the depopulation of the country by the transmigration of all its inhabitants; which events are described not at all in the style of prophetic predictions, but alluded to and bewailed as what had been already fully accomplished and brought to pass. We cannot admire too much the full and graceful flow of pathetic eloquence, in which the author pours forth the effusions of a patriotic heart, and piously weeps over the ruins of his venerable country. Never was there a more rich and elegant variety of beautiful images ranged together within so small a compass, nor more happily chosen and applied. But it was before observed, that the Prophet's peculiar talent lay in working up and expressing the passions of grief and pity; and unhappily for him, as a man and a citizen, he met with a subject but too well calculated to give his genius its full display.

Perhaps the most perfect and regular elegiac composition in the world, is the Lamentations of Jeremiah; as the Prophet mourns in this book over the destruction of the temple and the holy city, and the overthrow of the whole state, he assembles all the affecting images which a subject so melancholy could suggest. The composition is uncommonly artificial. By turns, the Prophet and the city Jerusalem are introduced, as pouring forth their sorrows; and, in the end, a

chorus of the people send up the most earnest and plaintive supplications to God. The lines of the original, as may in part appear from our translation, are longer than is usual in other kinds of Hebrew poetry; and the melody is rendered thereby more flowing, and better adapted to the querimonious strain of elegy.

EZEKIEL.

Ezekiel, who was the third of the great Prophets, was, like his contemporary Jeremiah, of the sacerdotal race. He was carried away captive to Babylon with Jehoiachin, king of Judah, in the year of the world 3406, before Christ 598; and was placed with many others of his countrymen upon the banks of the river Chebar in Mesopotamia, where he was favoured with the Divine revelations contained in this book. He began to prophesy in the fifth year of his captivity, and is supposed to have prophesied about twenty-one years. The boldness with which he censured the idolatry and wickedness of his countrymen, is said to have cost him his life; but his memory was greatly revered, not only by the Jews, but also by the Medes and Persians.

Ezekiel represents himself as the author of this book in the beginning and other parts of it; and justly assumes the character and pretensions of a Prophet; as such he has been universally considered.

This book may be considered under the five following divisions. The first three chapters contain the glorious appearance of God to the Prophet, and his solemn appointment to his office, with instructions and encouragements for the discharge of it. From the fourth to the twenty-fourth chapter inclusive, he describes, under a variety of visions and similitudes, the calamities impending over Judea, and the total destruction of the temple and city of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, occasionally predicting another period of yet greater desolation, and more general dispersion. From the beginning of the twenty-fifth to the end of the thirty-second chapter, the Prophet turns his attention to those nations, who had unfeelingly triumphed over the Jews in their affliction: predicting that destruction of the Ammonites, Moabites, and Philistines, which was effected by Nebuchadnezzar, that mighty instrument of God's wrath against the wickedness of man; and particularly he foretells the ruin and desolation of Tyre and Sidon, the fall of Egypt, and the base degeneracy of its future people, in a manner so forcible, in terms so accurately and minutely descriptive of their several fates and present condition, that nothing can be more interesting than to trace the accomplishment of these prophecies in the accounts of historians and travellers. From the thirty-second to the fortieth chapter, he inveighs against the accumulated sins of the Jews collectively, and the murmuring spirit of his captive brethren; exhorts them earnestly to repent of their hypocrisy and wickedness, upon the assurance that

God will accept sincere repentance; and encourages them to resignation by promises of deliverance, and by intimations of spiritual redemption. In the two last chapters of this division, under the promised victories to be obtained over Gog and Magog, he predicts the final return of the Jews from their dispersion in the latter days; with an obscurity however that can be dispelled only by the event. The last nine chapters contain a remarkable vision of the structure of a new temple and a new polity, applicable in the first instance to the return of the Babylonian captivity, but in its ultimate sense referring to the glory and prosperity of the universal church of Christ.

St. Jerome observes, that the visions of Ezekiel are among the things in Scripture "hard to be understood." This obscurity arises, in part at least, from the nature and design of the prophecies themselves: they were delivered amidst the gloom of captivity; and though calculated to cheer the drooping spirits of the Jews, and to keep alive a watchful and submissive confidence in the mercy of God, yet they were intended to communicate only such a degree of encouragement as was consistent with a state of punishment, and to excite an indistinct expectation of future blessings upon the condition of repentance and amendment; but, though mysterious in themselves, the predictions are related by the Prophet in a plain and historical manner. He seems to have been desirous of conveying the strong impressions which he received, as accurately as they were capable of being described. It ought to be observed, that the last

twelve chapters of this book bear a very striking resemblance to the concluding chapters of the Book of Revelation.

The style of this Prophet may be characterized as bold, vehement, and tragical; as often worked up to a kind of tremendous dignity. His book is highly parabolical, and abounds with figures and metaphorical expressions. He is employed rather in exciting our terror than in moving our pity. He displays a rough but majestic dignity; an unpolished, though noble simplicity: excelled perhaps in other respects by most of the Prophets; but none in the whole compass of writers has ever equalled him in the manner of writing, for which he seems singularly qualified by nature, in force, impetuosity, weight, and grandeur. He sometimes emphatically and indignantly repeats his sentiments; fully dilates his pictures; and describes the adulterous manners of his countrymen under the strongest and most exaggerated representations, that the licence of the eastern style would admit. His genius led him to amplification: and the Divine Spirit did not overrule the natural bent of his mind. This diffuseness of manner in mild and affectionate exhortation, this vehement enlarging on the guilt and consequent sufferings of his countrymen, seems wisely adapted to their capacities and circumstances; and must have had a forcible tendency to awaken them from their lethargy.

DANIEL.

DANIEL was of the tribe of Judah, and of very illustrious, if not of royal, descent. Josephus says, he was of the family of Zedekiah, the last king of Judah before the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuzar-adan. He was carried away captive to Babylon in the fourth year of Jehoiakim, in the year of the world 3398, probably in the eighteenth or twentieth year of his age: and on account of his birth, wisdom, and accomplishments, was selected to stand in the presence of Nebuchadnezzar.

In the vicissitudes of his life, as in the virtues which he displayed, he has been thought to have resembled Joseph. Like him, he lived amidst the corruption of a great court; and preserved an unshaken attachment to his religion, in a situation embarrassed with difficulties, and surrounded by temptations. He publicly professed God's service, in defiance of every danger; and predicted his fearful judgments to the very face of intemperate and powerful tyrants. It may be collected from the pensive cast of his writings, that he was of that melancholy disposition, which might be expected to characterize the servants of the true God amidst scenes of idolatry. He experienced throughout his life very signal and miraculous proofs of divine favour; and was looked up to by the Persians, as well as by his own countrymen, as an oracle of inspired wisdom. He appears to have attained a great age, as he prophesied during the whole

period of the captivity. He probably however did not long survive his last vision concerning the succession of the kings of Persia, which he beheld in the third year of Cyrus, and in the year of the world 3470, when the Prophet must have reached his ninetieth year.

The book of Daniel contains a very interesting mixture of history and prophecies. The six first chapters are chiefly historical, and are written with much spirit and animation: we seem to be present at the scenes described, and the whole is enriched with the most exalted sentiments of piety, and with the finest attestations to the praise and glory of God. The six last chapters are composed of prophecies, delivered at different times, all of which are however connected as parts of one great scheme. They extend through many ages, and furnish the most striking description of the fall of successive kingdoms, which were to be introductory to the establishment of the Messiah's reign. They characterize in descriptive terms the four great monarchies of the world to be succeeded by "that kingdom which shall not be destroyed." They foreshew the power and destruction of Antichrist in predictions repeated and extended by St. John; and conclude with a distinct assurance of a general resurrection to a life of everlasting shame, or everlasting glory.

In general the words of Daniel are proper, well chosen, and comprehensive; his diction simple and chaste, yet often strong and nervous; and his whole style compact, concise, and close, but pure and regular. Sometimes however he is diffusive

and copious, enlarges an idea, and swells an image to an uncommon pitch of grandeur. His book is not to be reckoned among the poetical compositions of the sacred volume: he makes great use indeed of parabolical imagery, but as a Prophet, shadowing out things and events by means of visions and allegories, without any colouring of a poetic style.

With respect to the genuineness and authenticity of this Book of Daniel, there is abundance both of external and of internal evidence. Of external evidence, there is all that can well be had or desired in a case of this nature: not only the testimony of the whole Jewish church and nation, who have constantly received this book as canonical; but of Josephus particularly, who recommends him as the greatest of the Prophets; of the Jewish Targums and Talmuds, which frequently cite and appeal to his authority; of St. Paul and St. John, who have copied many of his prophecies; of our Saviour himself, who citeth his words, and styleth him "Daniel the Prophet;" of ancient historians, who relate many of the same transactions; of the mother of the seven sons and of the father of the Maccabees, who both recommend the example of Daniel to their sons; of old Eleazar in Egypt, who, praying for the Jews then suffering under the persecution of Ptolemy Philopator, 3 Mac. vi. 5, 6, mentions the deliverance of Daniel out of the den of lions, together with the deliverance of the three men out of the fiery furnace; of the Jewish High Priest, who shewed Daniel's prophecies to Alexander the Great, whilst he was at Jerusalem;

and still higher, of Ezekiel, a contemporary writer, who greatly extols his piety and wisdom. Nor is the internal less powerful and convincing than the external evidence: for the language, the style, the manner of writing, and all other internal marks and characters, are perfectly agreeable to that age: and he appears plainly and undeniably to have been a Prophet by the exact accomplishment of his prophecies, as well those which have already been fulfilled, as those which are now fulfilling in the world.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO

THE TWELVE MINOR PROPHETS.

THE writings of the twelve Minor Prophets were in the Hebrew canon comprised in one book, which was called by St. Stephen "the Book of the Prophets," Acts vii. 42, compared with Amos v. 25. By whom they were so compiled is uncertain; probably, however, they were collected together in that form by Ezra, or by some member of the Great Synagogue; but certainly above two hundred years before the birth of Christ.

The twelve Minor Prophets were so called, not in respect to any supposed inferiority in their writings as to matter or style, but in reference to the brevity of their works. The shortness, indeed, of these prophecies seems to have been one reason for joining them together; by which means the

volume of their contents was swelled to a greatn
in some degree correspondent to their importan

These twelve Prophets furnish us in scatte
parts with a lively sketch of many particulars r
tive to other kingdoms; they describe in proph
anticipation, but with historical exactness, the f
of Babylon, of Nineveh, of Tyre, of Sidon, and
Damascus. The three last Prophets especia
illustrate many circumstances at a period wl
the historical pages of Scripture are closed, a
when profane authors are entirely wanting. Th
describe, under the most striking representatio
the advent and character of the Messiah and
kingdom; and endeavour, by the most admira
instruction, to excite those religious sentime
which would facilitate the reception of t
Gospel.

HOSEA.

Hosea has been supposed to be the most ancie
of the twelve Minor Prophets; and indeed by so
writers he is represented as having preceded all t
Prophets, since he flourished about the middle
the reign of Jeroboam the Second, the son of Joa
king of Israel, and towards the commencement
that of Uzziah, who began to reign over Jerusal
about the year of the world 3194. According
some accounts of no great authority, he was of t
tribe of Issachar, and of the city of Beleen
others represent him to have been of the tribe
Judah. He was the son of Beeri, and entered

the prophetic office some time between the years of the world 3194 and 3219. He continued to prophesy above sixty years: during the successive reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and probably to about the third year of the reign of the last; or, if we reckon by the kings of Israel, he may be described as having flourished during the reign of Jeroboam and his successors, to the sixth year of Hoshea, which corresponds with the third year of Hezekiah. Hosea was therefore nearly contemporary with Isaiah, Amos, and Jonah. It is probable that he resided chiefly in Samaria; and that he was the first Prophet, of those at least whose prophecies we possess, that predicted the destruction of that country; which was effected soon after the Prophet's death by Shalmaneser, king of Assyria.

Hosea's principal subject is that which is the principal subject indeed of all the Prophets—the guilt of the Jewish nation in general, their disobedient refractory spirit, the heavy judgments that awaited them, their final conversion to God, their re-establishment in the land of promise, and their restoration to God's favour, under the immediate protection of the Messiah, in the latter ages of the world. He confines himself more closely to this single subject than any other Prophet. Comparatively, he seems to care little about other people. He wanders not, like Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, into the collateral history of surrounding heathen nations. He meddles not, like Daniel, with the revolutions of the great empires of the world. His own country seems to engross his whole attention;

her privileges, her crimes, her punishment, her pardon. He predicts, indeed, in the strongest and the clearest terms, the ingrafting of the Gentiles into the church of God: but he mentions it only generally; he enters not, like Isaiah, into a minute detail of the progress of the business. He alludes to the calling of our Lord from Egypt; and to the resurrection on the third day; and he celebrates, in the loftiest strains of triumph and exultation, the Saviour's final victory over death and hell. But yet, of all the Prophets, he certainly enters the least into the detail of the mysteries of redemption. We have nothing in him descriptive of the events of the interval between the two advents of our Lord: nothing diffuse and circumstantial, upon the great and interesting mysteries of the Incarnation, and the Atonement. His country, and his kindred, is the subject next his heart. Their crimes excite his indignation; their sufferings interest his pity; their future exaltation is the object on which his imagination fixes with delight. It is a remarkable dispensation of providence, that clear notices, though in general terms, of the universal redemption, should be found in a writer so strongly possessed with national partialities. This Judaism, if it may be so called seems to make the particular character of Hosea as a Prophet. Not that the ten tribes are exclusively his subject. His country is indeed his particular and constant subject; but his country generally, in both its branches, not in either taken by itself.

Hosea delights in a style, which always becomes obscure when the language of the writer ceases to

be a living language. He writes in short, detached, disjointed sentences; not wrought up into artificial periods. His transitions from reproof to persuasion, from threatening to promise, from terror to hope, and the contrary, are rapid and unexpected. His similes are brief, accumulated, and often introduced without the particle of similitude. Yet these are not the vices, but the perfections of the holy Prophet's style: for to these circumstances it owes that eagerness and fiery animation, which are the characteristic excellence of his writings, and are so peculiarly suited to his subject.

JOEL.

There is little doubt that Joel lived in the reigns of Uzziah king of Judah, and of Jeroboam II. king of Israel, who flourished as contemporary sovereigns between the years of the world 3194 and 3219; and that he delivered his prophecies soon after Hosea had commenced his ministry; though some Jewish and Christian writers have assigned to him a later period; some placing him in the reign of Jotham; others in that of Joram; and others contending that he prophesied under Manasseh, or Josiah; the last of which monarchs began to reign about 640 years before the birth of Christ.

Joel was the son of Pethuel, or Bethuel, and, according to some reports, of the tribe of Reuben. He is related to have been born at Bethoron;

which was probably the lower or nether Bethoron, a town in the territory of Benjamin, between Jerusalem and Cesarea. Of the particulars of his life, or of the age to which he attained, we have no account. Dorotheus relates only that he died in peace at the place of his nativity.

The book appears to be entirely prophetic; though Joel, under the impression of foreseen calamities, describes their effects as present, and by an animated representation anticipates the scenes of misery which lowered over Judea, chap. i. 4—7, 10, 16—20. Though it cannot be positively determined to what period the description contained in the first chapter may apply, it is generally supposed that the Prophet blends two subjects of affliction in one general consideration or beautiful allegory; and that, under the devastation to be produced by locusts in the vegetable world, he portrays some more distant calamities to be produced by the armies of the Chaldeans in their invasion of Judea.

In the second chapter the Prophet proceeds to a more general denunciation of God's vengeance; which is delivered with such force and aggravation of circumstance, as to be in some measure descriptive of that final judgment, which every temporal dispensation of the Deity must faintly prefigure. The severe declarations of Joel are intermingled with exhortations to repentance, and to the auxiliary means of promoting its effects, fasting and prayer; as also with promises of deliverance, and of a prosperity predictive of evangelical blessings.

In consideration of these important prophecies,

we need not wonder that the Jews should have looked up to Joel with particular reverence, or that he should be cited as a Prophet by the evangelical writers; chap. ii. 32. compared with Rom. x. 13; Acts ii. 16—21.

AMOS

Amos appears to have been contemporary with Hosea, but it is uncertain which was the first favoured by Divine revelations. They both began to prophesy during the time that Uzziah and Jeroboam the Second reigned over their respective kingdoms; and Amos saw his first vision "two years before the earthquake," Amos i. 1; which, as we learn from Zechariah, chap. xiv. 5, happened in the days of Uzziah. Amos, however, began to prophesy some time between the year of the world 3194 and 3219. Some have confounded him with the father of Isaiah.

Amos was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit, chap. vii. 14. In the simplicity of former times, and in the happy climates of the east, these occupations were by no means considered in that degrading light in which they have been viewed, since refinement hath introduced a taste for the elegant arts of life. He was no Prophet, as he informed Amaziah, chap. vii. 14, neither was he a Prophet's son: that is, he had no regular education in the schools of the Prophets, but was called by an express irresistible commission from God (chap. iii. 8; vii. 15.) to prophesy

unto his people Israel. The Holy Spirit did not disdain to speak by the voice of the most humble man; and selected his ministers as well from the tents of the shepherd, as from the palace of the sovereign, 1 Cor. i. 27—29: respecting only the qualities, and not the conditions, of his agents, inasmuch as he was capable of inspiring knowledge and eloquence where they did not previously exist.

Amos undoubtedly composed his prophecies in their present form. He speaks of himself as the author of them, chap. vii. 8; viii. 1, 2; and his prophetic character is established, not only by the admission of his book into the canon, and by the testimony of other writers, Tobit ii. 6; Acts vii. 42, 43; xv. 15—17; but by the exact accomplishment of many prophecies which he delivered. His work consists of several distinct discourses; the particular period of their delivery cannot now be ascertained. They chiefly respect the kingdom of Israel, though he sometimes inveighs against Judah, and threatens the kingdoms that bordered on Palestine; as the Syrians, Philistines, Tyrians, Edomites, Ammonites, and Moabites. He predicts, in clear terms, the captivities and the destruction of Israel, to be preceded by fearful signs on earth, and in the heavens, chap. viii. 8—13; concluding with assurances that God would not utterly destroy the house of Jacob; but after sifting, as it were, and cleansing the house of Israel among the nations, God should again raise up the tabernacle, that is, the kingdom of David, to be enlarged to more than its first splendour by the accession of

Gentile subjects; and to be succeeded by the establishment of that government, which the Prophet describes under poetical images as a blessed dispensation of security, abundance, and peace, chap. ix. 11—15.

OBADIAH.

This Prophet hath furnished us with no particulars of his own origin or life, any more than of the period in which he was favoured by the Divine revelations. That he received a commission to prophesy is evident; as well from the admission of his work into the sacred canon, as from the completion of those predictions which he delivered.

It is probable that he flourished about the same time with Ezekiel and Jeremiah; and the best opinions concur in supposing him to have prophesied a little after the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar, which happened about the year of the world 3416. He predicted therefore the same circumstances which those Prophets had foretold against the Edomites, who had upon many occasions favoured the enemies of Judah; and who, when "strangers carried their forces away captive, and foreigners cast lots upon Jerusalem," had rejoiced at the destruction, and insulted the children of Judah in their affliction, ver. 11—14; Ps. cxxxvii. 7.

The Prophet, after describing the pride and cruelty of the Edomites, declares that though they dwelt in fancied security among the clefts of the

rocks, yet the "men of Teman should be dismayed," and "every one of the mount of Esau should be cut off by slaughter;" and that the men who had confederated with them against Jacob, and been supported by them as their allies, should inflict the punishment of their malevolence. The Prophet concludes with consolatory assurances of future restoration and prosperity to the Jews, to whom should arise deliverance from Zion: saviours who should judge the nations; and a spiritual kingdom, appropriated and consecrated to the Lord.

JONAH.

Though Jonah be placed fifth in the order of the Minor Prophets, he is generally considered as the most ancient of all the Prophets whose writings we possess, not excepting Hosea. Jonah was the son of Amittai, of the tribe of Zebulun; and was born at Gath-helper, in that tribe: 2 Kings xiv. 25; Josh. xix. 13. St. Jerome informs us, that the Prophet's sepulchre was shewn there in his time; and there the natives still believe it to exist.

Jonah is generally supposed to have flourished in the reigns of Joash and Jeroboam the Second, kings of Israel; the former of whom began to reign in the year of the world 3163, the latter died in the year of the world 3220.

The style of Jonah is narrative and simple; the beautiful prayer contained in the second chapter has been justly admired. The book furnishes us

with a fine description of the power and mercies of God.

MICAH.

MICAH was unquestionably the author of this book; and he speaks in that character, chap. iii. 1, 8. He calls himself a Morasthite, chap. i. 1; and is supposed to have been a native of Morasthi, a village situated near the city of Eleutheropolis, in the southern part of Judah; a place distinguished by St. Jerome from Mareshah, mentioned in this book, chap. i. 15, and in Joshua, chap. xv. 44.

Micah speaks only of the kings of Judah; and he prophesied in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, contemporary with whom were Pekah and Hoshea, the two last kings of Israel. Micah then began to prophesy soon after Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, and Amos; and he prophesied between the year of the world 3246, when Jotham began to reign, and the year of the world 3305, when Hezekiah died: but probably not during the whole of that period.

Micah, who received the Divine revelations by vision, was appointed to preach both against Israel and Judah; and executed his commission with great animation and zeal. One of his predictions is related to have saved the life of Jeremiah; who under the reign of Jehoiakim would have been put to death for prophesying the destruction of the temple, had it not appeared that Micah had foretold the same thing under Hezekiah about one hundred

years before, Mic. iii. 12. Micah is mentioned as a Prophet in the book of Jeremiah, chap. xxvi. 18, compared with Mic. iii. 12; and in the New Testament, Matt. ii. 5, and John vii. 42. He is imitated by succeeding Prophets, as he himself had borrowed the expressions of those who preceded, or flourished at the same time with him. Our Saviour himself, indeed, condescended to speak in the language of the Prophet.

The Prophet predicted in clear terms the invasions of Shalmaneser and Sennacherib, and their triumph over Israel and Judah; the captivities, dispersion, and deliverance of Israel; the cessation of prophecy; the destruction of Assyria and of Babylon, the representatives of the enemies of the Christian church; the birth of the Everlasting Ruler at Beth-lehem Ephratah; the establishment and exaltation of Christ's kingdom over all nations; the influence of the gospel; and the destruction of Jerusalem, chap. iii. 12.

NAHUM.

Nahum describes himself as an Elkoshite; which some have considered as a patronymic expression, conceiving it to imply his being a descendant of Elkosha; but which is generally supposed to intimate that he was born at Elkosh, or Elkosha, a small village in Galilee, of which St. Jerome professes to have seen the ruins.

It may be concluded from chap. ii. 2, that Nahum prophesied after the captivity of the ten tribes.

Josephus places him in the reign of Jotham, and says, that his predictions came to pass one hundred and fifteen years afterwards. According to our best chronologers, this date would bring us to the year in which Samaria was taken.

The illustrious prophecy foretelling the future downfall of the Assyrian empire, remarkably accomplished in little more than a century after it was delivered, affords a signal evidence of the inspiration of Nahum; and a striking lesson of humility to human pride. It must have furnished much consolation to the tribes who were carried away captive by the king of Assyria, as well as to those of Benjamin and Judah; and all must have rejoiced with the hope, of deliverance, to hear that their conquerors should in time be conquered, their city levelled to the dust, and their empire overturned. The book in which these interesting prophecies are contained is justly considered by Bishop Lowth as a complete and perfect poem, of which the conduct and imagery are truly admirable.

The fire, spirit, and sublimity of Nahum, are unequalled. His scenes are painted with great variety and splendour. The opening of his work, in which he describes the attributes of God, is august; and the preparations for the attack, as well as the destruction of Nineveh, are represented with singular effect. The art with which the immediate destruction of the Assyrians under Sennacherib is intermingled with the future ruin of the empire, affords a very elegant specimen of the manner in which the Prophets delight to introduce present and distant events under one point of view. The

allegorical pictures in this book are remarkably beautiful, chap. ii. 7, 11, 12.

HABAKKUK.

Some writers, whose relations are probably founded on traditionary accounts, describe Habakkuk as a native of Bethzakar; and affirm, that he was of the tribe of Simeon. Some suppose him to have flourished in the reign of Manasseh; others in that of Josiah; and some have placed him so late as Zedekiah: but the most approved opinion is, that he prophesied under Jehoiakim, who ascended the throne in the year of the world 3395, and reigned over Judah eleven years.

As the Prophet makes no mention of the Assyrians, and speaks of the Chaldean invasions as near at hand, chap. i. 5; ii. 3; iii. 2, 16—19, he probably lived after the destruction of the Assyrian empire in the fall of Nineveh, in the year of the world 3392, and not long before the devastation of Judea by the victories of Nebuchadnezzar. Habakkuk was then nearly contemporary with, and predicted the same events as, Jeremiah; and he probably lived to witness the completion of that part of his prophecy which related to the afflictions of his country.

It should seem from the title prefixed, and from the intimation subjoined to the last verse of the prayer in the third chapter, as well as from the word Selah, which occurs three times in the chapter, that the prayer was set to music; and perhaps

erformed in the service of the temple; and it was ossibly delivered in a kind of measure. The style f the whole book is poetical; but more especially is beautiful and perfect ode, which is decorated ith every kind of imagery and poetical embellishent. Habakkuk is imitated by succeeding Prohets, and is cited as an inspired person by the vangelical writers, Heb. x. 37, 38; Rom. i. 17; al. iii. 11; Acts xiii. 41; compared with Hab. i. 5.

ZEPHANIAH.

The Prophet Zephaniah informs us, that he was e son of Cushi; and that the word of the Lord ame to him in the days of Josiah king of Judah. le is supposed to have been of the tribe of Simeon; id as he traces back his pedigree for four geneations, he was doubtless of noble birth: though t of the royal family, as some have imagined om the resemblance between the names of Hezeiah and that of Hizkiah, from whom the Prophet rofesses himself to have been a descendant; the eriod which intervened between king Hezekiah id the time in which Zephaniah flourished, being arce sufficient to admit of three intermediate anstors to the Prophet.

Zephaniah begins with denouncing God's wrath ainst "the remnant of Baal, and the name of e Chemarims:" against "them which worshipped e host of heaven, and swore by Malcham;" and erefore, probably, he addressed those idolatrous iests who were not yet extirpated by the religious

zeal of Josiah, compare Zeph. i. 4, 5—9, with 2 Kings xxiii. 5, 6, 12, &c.: he foretold also the destruction of Nineveh, which happened in the year of the world 3392. And upon these considerations he may be supposed to have prophesied before the last reformation made by Josiah, in the year of the world 3381. He may be conceived also to have entered on his office towards the commencement of the reign of that monarch, who ascended the throne in the year of the world 3364, since he preceded Jeremiah, who began his prophetic ministry in the thirteenth year of Josiah's reign. Epiphanius relates, that Zephaniah was born at mount Sacabatha, or Bacatha.

HAGGAI.

Haggai is generally reputed to have been born in the captivity, and to have returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel, Ezra ii. 2. He is reckoned as the tenth in order among the Prophets, both in the Hebrew and Greek copies; and may be considered as the first of the three Prophets who flourished among the Jews after their return to their country. He appears to have been raised up by God to exhort Zerubbabel, Ezra v. 1, and Joshua the high priest, the son of Josedech, to resume the work of the temple; which had been interrupted near fourteen years, in consequence of the intrigues of the Samaritans, and other obstructions excited to defeat the edict of Cyrus, Ezra iv. 24. He began to prophesy in the second year of Darius Hystaspes,

in the year of the world 3484, about fifteen years after the foundation of the temple had been laid, Ezra v. 1. The Prophets, after the captivity, sometimes reckon by the dates of those sovereigns to whom their country was subjected.

ZECHARIAH.

ZECHARIAH was one of the last in that succession of Prophets whom God sent at sundry times with notifications of his will to mankind under the Jewish dispensation. That he was of the number of the captivity that returned from Babylon to Jerusalem in consequence of the decree of Cyrus is unquestionable; but that he was very young when he came there, appears from this, that sixteen or seventeen years afterwards, when he had begun to exercise his prophetical function, he is styled "a young man," chap. ii. 4. In his first chapter he twice styles himself Zechariah the son of Berechiah the son of Iddo; but Ezra v. 1; vi. 14, he is called simply the son of Iddo; which may be accounted for on the supposition that his father Berechiah died before his grandfather Iddo, perhaps before the return from Babylon; consequently out of the family Zechariah came to be better known and distinguished as the son of his surviving, though remote parent, in whose house he lived, and to whose inheritance he was next in succession. It was in the eighth month of the second year of the reign of Darius the son of Hystaspes, king of

Persia, that is, about the year 520 before the Christian era, that he first opened his divine commission with a serious and solemn call to repentance. In the same year he is found, together with the Prophet Haggai, employed in assisting the endeavours of Zerubbabel and Jeshua to excite and animate the people at Jerusalem to a vigorous prosecution of the work of rebuilding their temple. For this purpose he communicated the visions which are contained in the six first chapters, and which he was favoured with on the four and twentieth day of the eleventh month in the year aforesaid; all evidently calculated to inspire the strongest hopes and assurance of future prosperity through the returning favour of the Almighty; and thus to convince the people, that they were not labouring on a barren and ungrateful soil. The same design is further carried on in a subsequent revelation made to him about two years afterwards, which is the subject of chap. vii. viii.

Thus far with regard to the former part of these prophecies, the time and occasion are ascertained by the dates annexed to them, from whence the general scope of them is easily deducible; but with respect to those that follow, we are left more in the way of conjecture. It is however highly probable, from the apparent difference both of style and subject, that they came forth at a different and more advanced period of our Prophet's life. It is not at all surprising, if this writer, as he advanced in years and dignity, should have learned to express himself in a tone of more elevation and energy. At such

distant periods also, as we suppose, the subject of course would be materially changed. For he would no longer have occasion to stimulate his countrymen to the building of the temple, which was already completely finished; but he was actually engaged in predicting some remarkable occurrences, that would distinguish his own and the neighbouring nations in remote periods, some of them perhaps not yet arrived; and in urging an immediate reformation of national manners. In so doing, what more natural to expect, than that he would encounter hatred and opposition from those whose corruptions he was called upon to censure and repress? Accordingly there is sufficient ground to conclude, that all this happened to him, from what he says in the eleventh chapter, of the freedom and zeal with which he exposed and counteracted the iniquitous conduct of those who made merchandize of the flock; meaning those unprincipled guides, who assumed the direction of the people for no better purpose than to sacrifice them to the gratification of their own ambition and avarice. Several of these, by exhibiting in himself the contrast of a good shepherd, he found means at first to deprive, at least of that influence and authority which they once possessed, and had wickedly abused. The sequel may easily be conjectured; for from similar causes similar effects may naturally be expected. His enraged adversaries, after thwarting and defeating all his endeavours for the public good, at length, no doubt by intrigue and misrepresentation, so far succeeded, as to turn the tide of popular prejudice and resent-

ment against him; and he was barbarously murdered, as his namesake Zechariah the son of Jehoiada had been for the same cause, and in the selfsame place, between three and four hundred years before. For this we have no less authority than that of our blessed Lord himself, who expressly calls the person of whom he speaks, Matt. xxiii. 35, "Zacharias son of Barachias," distinguishing him from the before-mentioned Zechariah son of Jehoiada by his patronymic, as effectually as two men, bearing the same Christian name in our days, would be distinguished by their family names. Both were priests as well as Prophets, and therefore that both should suffer nearly on the same spot will appear less surprising, when we recollect, that the space between the porch and the altar was the court of the priests, appropriated to them for the public exercise of their sacred ministry.

That he is in some degree obscure and hard to be understood is not to be questioned. And which of the ancient Prophets is not so? It is of the nature of prophecy to affect a degree of abstruseness before the accomplishment, in order not to clash with the freedom of human agency. And there is no doubt, that some of Zechariah's predictions relate to matters that are still involved in futurity. No wonder then that these fall not within the reach of our comprehension. Others there are, which we have good reason to believe have already been fulfilled, but which do not appear with such a degree of evidence, as they probably would have done if we had been better informed concerning the times

and facts to which they relate. With respect to the emblems and types that are exhibited, they are most of them of easy and determinate application. And in favour of the importance of his subject matter it must be acknowledged, that, next to Isaiah, Zechariah is the most evangelical of all the Prophets, having more frequent and more clear and direct allusions to the character and coming of the Messiah and his kingdom, than any of the rest. Upon the whole, we shall find the diction remarkably pure, the construction natural and perspicuous and the style judiciously varied according to the nature of the subject; simple and plain in the narrative and historical parts; but in those that are wholly prophetical, the latter chapters in particular, rising to a degree of elevation and grandeur, scarcely inferior to the sublimest of the inspired writings.

The style of Zechariah is so remarkably similar to that of Jeremiah, that the Jews were accustomed to observe, that the spirit of Jeremiah had passed into him. He is generally prosaic till towards the conclusion of his work, when he becomes more elevated and poetical. The whole work is beautifully connected by easy transitions, and present and future scenes are blended with the most delicate contexture.

MALACHI.

Malachi was the last of those Prophets who flourished before the Gospel dispensation.

Malachi is represented by some traditionary accounts to have been of the tribe of Zebulun, and a native of Sapha; to have died young, and to have been buried with his ancestors at Sapha: after having assisted as a member of the great synagogue in the re-establishment of order and prosperity in his country. Archbishop Usher conceives him to have flourished about the year of the world 3588, which is about twenty years later than the period assigned to him by Blair: but as it appears from the consent of all Jewish and Christian antiquity, that the light of prophecy expired in Malachi, we may suppose that the termination of his ministry coincided with the accomplishment of the first seven weeks of Daniel's prophecy, which was the period allotted for "sealing up the vision and prophecy." This, according to Prideaux's account, must be assigned to the year of the world 3595, but according to the calculations of Bishop Lloyd, to the year of the world 3607, twelve years later: whichever reckoning we may prefer, Malachi must be admitted to have completed the canon of the Old Testament, about 400 years before the birth of Christ; when the great designs of providence were completed in the termination of the prophetic ministry; and when a scheme of prophecy was unfolded which in its entire contexture was to be accommodated to, and to characterize, the Messiah.

This Prophet sealed up the volume of the prophecy in the description of that personage at whose appearance the Evangelists begin the Gospel history, Mark i. 1, 2; and he, who terminated the illustrious succession of the Prophets, and pre-

dicted the coming of the Baptist, was in an especial degree entitled to a share of our Saviour's testimony: who declared, in terms which defined the period and extent of prophecy, that "all the Prophets prophesied until John," Matt. xi. 13; Luke xvi. 16; Malachi is likewise elsewhere frequently cited as a Prophet by the writers of the New Testament, Matt. xi. 10; xvii. 10—12; Mark i. 2; ix. 11, 12; Luke i. 17; vii. 27; Rom. ix. 13.

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

THE canon of the New Testament consists of twenty-seven books, which were written by eight different authors, all of whom were contemporary with our Saviour. These books were written at different times, and at places remote from each other; and when the latest of them was published, the Gospel had been preached, and churches founded, in many parts of Asia, Europe, and Africa. Different churches at first received different books, according to their situation and circumstances; their canons were gradually enlarged, and it was not long, though the precise time is not known, before the same, or very nearly the same, books were acknowledged by the Christians of all countries. These books may be divided into four parts; namely, the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles, and the Revelation.

The word Evangelium, rendered Gospel, signifies in Greek authors any joyful tidings, and is exactly answerable to our English word Gospel, which is derived from the Saxon words, *God* (good) and

spel (speech or tidings). The doctrine of salvation taught by Jesus Christ is called Gospel, or good tidings, in several passages of the New Testament, Matt. iv. 23; Mark xiii. 10; Ephes. i. 13. Hence, in time, the name came to signify the history of Christ's preaching and miracles.

The four Gospels contain each of them the history of our Saviour's life and ministry; but we must remember, that no one of the Evangelists undertook to give an account of all the miracles which Christ performed, or of all the instructions which he delivered. They are written with different degrees of conciseness; but every one of them is sufficiently full to prove that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Saviour of the world, who had been predicted by a long succession of Prophets, and whose advent was expected at the time of his appearance, both by Jews and Gentiles.

That all the books, which convey to us the history of events under the New Testament, were written and immediately published by persons contemporary with the events, is most fully proved by the testimony of an unbroken series of authors, reaching from the days of the Evangelists to the present times; by the concurrent belief of Christians of all denominations; and by the unreserved confession of avowed enemies to the Gospel. In this point of view the writings of the ancient fathers of the Christian church are invaluable. They contain not only frequent references and allusions to the books of the New Testament, but also such numerous professed quotations from them, that it is demonstratively certain, that these books

existed in their present state a few years after the conclusion of Christ's ministry upon earth. No unbeliever in the Apostolic age, in the age immediately subsequent to it, or indeed in any age whatever, was ever able to disprove the facts recorded in these books; and it does not appear, that in the early times any such attempt was made. The facts therefore related in the New Testament must be admitted to have really happened. But if all the circumstances of the history of Jesus, that is, his miraculous conception in the womb of the Virgin, the time at which he was born, the place where he was born, the family from which he was descended, the nature of the doctrines which he preached, the meanness of his condition, his rejection, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, with many other minute particulars; if all these various circumstances in the history of Jesus exactly accord with the predictions of the Old Testament relative to the promised Messiah, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, it follows that Jesus was that Messiah. And again, if Jesus really performed the miracles as related in the Gospels, and was perfectly acquainted with the thoughts and designs of men, his Divine mission cannot be doubted. Lastly, if he really foretold his own death and resurrection, the descent of the Holy Ghost, its miraculous effects, the sufferings of the Apostles, the call of the Gentiles, and the destruction of Jerusalem, it necessarily follows that he spake by the authority of God himself. These and many other arguments, founded in the more than human character of

Jesus, in the rapid propagation of the Gospel, in the excellence of its precepts and doctrines, and in the constancy, intrepidity, and fortitude of its early professors, incontrovertibly establish the truth and divine origin of the Christian religion, and afford to us, who live in these latter times, the most positive confirmation of the promise of our Lord, "that the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

ST. MATTHEW.

It appears from the concurrent testimony of all antiquity, that this Gospel was really written by St. Matthew, whose name it bears, and that it was from the earliest times universally received as such by the Christian church.

Matthew, called also Levi, was the son of Alpheus, but probably not of that Alpheus who was the father of the Apostle James the Less. He was a native of Galilee; but it is not known in what city of that country he was born, or to what tribe of the people of Israel he belonged. Although a Jew, he was a publican or tax gatherer under the Romans; and his office seems to have consisted in collecting the customs due upon commodities which were carried, and from persons who passed, over the lake of Gennesareth. Our Saviour commanded him, as he was sitting at a place where he received these customs, to follow him, Matt. ix. 9. He immediately obeyed, and from that time became a constant attendant on our Saviour, and was

appointed one of the twelve Apostles. Matthew, probably soon after his call, made an entertainment at his house, at which were present Christ and some of his disciples, and also several publicans, Matt. ix. 10; Luke v. 29. After the ascension of our Saviour, he continued, with the other Apostles, to preach the Gospel for some time in Judea: but, as there is no farther account of him in any writer of the first four centuries, we must consider it as uncertain into what country he afterwards went, and likewise in what manner, and at what time, he died.

It is generally agreed, on the most satisfactory evidence, that St. Matthew's Gospel was the first that was written; but, respecting its precise date, we have no certain information, and a great variety of opinions has prevailed. Of the several dates assigned to it, which deserve any attention, the earliest is the year 38 of the Christian era, and the latest the year 64.

St. Matthew, being from the time of his call a constant attendant upon our Saviour, was well qualified to write the history of his life. He relates what he saw and heard in a natural and unaffected style; and he is more circumstantial in his accounts than any other of the Evangelists. That he published his Gospel in Palestine for the immediate use of the Jews, was the opinion of all ancient ecclesiastical writers; and it is confirmed by the contents of the book itself. There are more references in this than in any other Gospel to Jewish customs; and cities and places in Palestine are always mentioned in it as being well known by

those to whom it is addressed. St. Matthew seems studiously to have selected such circumstances as were calculated to conciliate or strengthen the faith of the Jews; for example, no sentiment relative to the Messiah was more prevalent among them than that he should be of the race of Abraham, and family of David; and accordingly St. Matthew begins his narrative by shewing the descent of Jesus from those two illustrious persons. He then relates the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, the city in which the Messiah was expected to be born; and throughout his Gospel he omits no opportunity of explaining the Scriptures, and of pointing out the fulfilment of prophecy, which was known to have greater weight with the Jews than any other species of evidence: moreover, he records many of our Saviour's reproofs to the Jews for their errors and superstitions, and thus endeavours to eradicate from their minds those prejudices which impeded the progress, or sullied the purity, of the Christian faith. Though this Gospel was particularly adapted to the Jews, it must also have been very useful in confirming and in converting other persons, especially those who were acquainted with the types and predictions of the Old Testament. As the sacred writers, especially the Evangelists, have many qualities in common, so there is something in every one of them, which, if attended to, will be found to distinguish him from the rest. That which principally distinguishes St. Matthew, is the distinctness and particularity with which he has related many of our Lord's discourses and moral instructions. Of these, his sermon on

the mount, his charge to the Apostles, his illustrations of the nature of his kingdom, and his prophecy on mount Olivet, are examples. He has also wonderfully united simplicity and energy in relating the replies of his Master to the cavils of his adversaries. Being early called to the apostleship, he was an eyewitness and earwitness of most of the things which he relates: and though it does not appear to be the scope of any of these historians to adjust their narratives to the precise order of time wherein the events happened, there are some circumstances which incline us to think, that St. Matthew has approached at least as near to that order as any of them. And this, we may observe, would naturally be the distinguishing characteristic of a narrative, written very soon after the events had taken place. The most remarkable things recorded in St. Matthew's Gospel, and not found in any other, are the following: the visit of the eastern magi; our Saviour's flight into Egypt; the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem; the parable of the ten virgins; the dream of Pilate's wife; the resurrection of many saints at our Saviour's crucifixion; and the bribing of the Roman guard, appointed to watch at the holy sepulchre, by the chief priests and elders.

ST. MARK.

It has been doubted, both in ancient and modern times, whether St. Mark the Evangelist is the same as "John, whose surname was Mark," men-

tioned in the Acts, and in some of St. Paul's Epistles, Acts xii. 12, 25; Col. iv. 10. Allowing that they were the same, which, though an uncertain point, may be believed without any inconsistency, the writer of this Gospel was the nephew of Barnabas, being his sister's son; and it is supposed that he was converted to the Gospel by St. Peter, who calls him his son, 1 Pet. v. 13. The first historical fact mentioned of him in the New Testament is, that he went in the year 44 from Jerusalem to Antioch with Barnabas and Saul. Not long after, he set out from Antioch with those Apostles upon a journey, which they undertook by the direction of the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel in different countries; but he soon left them, probably without sufficient reason, at Perga in Pamphylia, and went to Jerusalem, Acts xiii. Afterwards, when Paul and Barnabas had determined to visit the several churches which they had established, Barnabas proposed that they should take Mark with them; to which Paul objected, because Mark had left them in their former journey. This produced a sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas, which ended in their separation. Mark accompanied his uncle Barnabas to Cyprus, but it is not mentioned whither they went when they had left that island. We may conclude that St. Paul was afterwards reconciled to St. Mark, from the manner in which he mentions him in his Epistles, written subsequently to this dispute, and particularly from the direction which he gives to Timothy; "Take Mark, and bring him with thee; for he is

profitable to me for the ministry." No further circumstances are recorded of St. Mark in the New Testament; but it is believed, upon the authority of ancient writers, that, soon after his journey with St. Barnabas, he met with St. Peter in Asia, and that he continued with him for some time, perhaps till St. Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome.

St. Mark, even humanly speaking, was a very credible witness of the life of Christ. He was, in the strict sense of the word, an Evangelist; that is, a preacher sent by the Apostles to Jews and Gentiles, without being confined to any particular church. What Timothy was to St. Paul, Mark was to St. Peter and St. Barnabas, and at last he bore the same relation to St. Paul himself. It was usual for such Evangelists to have extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost, 1 Tim. iv. 14; 2 Tim. i. 6. Hence we have just reason to believe that St. Mark wrote by inspiration: and, as the primitive church has transmitted to us his Gospel as a book of divine authority, without ever entertaining the least doubt of his inspiration, we have every reason to consider it as a work divinely inspired.

Different persons have assigned different dates to this Gospel: but, as there is an almost unanimous concurrence of opinion that it was written while St. Mark was with St. Peter at Rome, and as we find no ancient authority for supposing that St. Peter was in that city till the year 64, we may be disposed to date the publication of this Gospel about the year 65.

As St. Mark wrote this Gospel for the use of

the Christians at Rome, which was at that time the great metropolis and common centre of all civilized nations, we accordingly find it free from all peculiarities, and equally accommodated to all descriptions of persons. Quotations from the ancient Prophets, and allusions to Jewish customs, are as much as possible avoided; and such explanations are added as might be necessary for Gentile readers at Rome: thus, when "Jordan" is first mentioned in this Gospel, the word "river" is prefixed, chap. i. 5; the Oriental word "Corban" is said to mean "a gift," chap. vii. 11; the "preparation" is said to be "the day before the sabbath," chap. xv. 42; and "defiled hands" are said to mean "unwashen hands" chap. vii. 2; and the superstition of the Jews upon that subject is stated more at large than it would have been by a person writing at Jerusalem.

The Gospel of St. Mark is a simple and compendious narrative, and his style is clear and correct; he is, in general, much less circumstantial than St. Matthew; and usually follows his arrangement. Some authors represent St. Mark's Gospel as an abridgment of St. Matthew's, but this is surely a mistaken idea. St. Mark entirely omits several important things related by St. Matthew, such as the genealogy and birth of Christ, the massacre at Bethlehem, and the sermon upon the mount. He dilates upon some facts which are concisely mentioned by St. Matthew, such as the cure of the paralytic in the second chapter (compare Matt. ix. 2.), and the miracle among the Gadarenes in the fifth (compare Matt. viii. 28).

He now and then departs from the order of and arrangement of facts observed by St. Matt and there have been enumerated above t circumstances noticed by St. Mark, which ar found in any other Gospel: many of thes trifling, but two of them are the miraculous recorded in the seventh chapter, and in the n of the eighth. If, however, we except t additions made by St. Mark to the narrative mon to the first three Evangelists, there ar more than twenty-four verses in his whole G which contain facts not recorded either b Matthew or by St. Luke.

ST. LUKE.

THE New Testament informs us of very particulars respecting St. Luke, the writer o Gospel. He is not once named in any o Gospels.

It is probable that St. Luke was by birth a and a native of Antioch in Syria; and there s no reason to doubt that "Luke the beloved sician," mentioned in the Epistle to the Colos chap. iv. 14, was Luke the Evangelist. I introduction to his Gospel, chap. i. 1, &c Luke appears to intimate, that he was not hi an eyewitness of the things he was about to r however, some have thought that he was o the seventy disciples; but there is no author the Scriptures for that opinion, and there are no means of ascertaining whether he was o

not, unless the above-mentioned passage may be considered as conclusive against it.

We have seen that St. Luke was for several years the companion of St. Paul, and many ancient writers consider this Gospel as having the sanction of St. Paul, in the same manner as St. Mark's had that of St. Peter. Whoever will examine the Evangelist's and the Apostle's account of the Eucharist in their respective original works, will observe a great coincidence of expression. Compare Luke xxii. 19, 20. with 1 Cor. xi. 23—25.

St. Luke seems to have had more learning than any other of the Evangelists, and his language is more various, copious, and pure. This superiority in style may perhaps be owing to his longer residence in Greece, and greater acquaintance with Gentiles of good education, than fell to the lot of the writers of the other three Gospels.

This Gospel contains many things which are not found in the other Gospels; among which are the following: the birth of John the Baptist; the Roman census in Judea; the circumstances attending Christ's birth at Bethlehem; the vision granted to the shepherds; the early testimony of Simeon and Anna; Christ's conversation with the doctors in the temple when he was twelve years old; the parables of the good Samaritan, of the prodigal son, of the rich man and Lazarus, of the wicked judge, and of the publican and pharisee; the miraculous cure of the woman who had been bowed down by illness eighteen years; the cleansing of the ten lepers, and the restoring to life of the son of a widow at Nain; the account of Zaccheus, and

of the penitent thief; and the particulars of journey to Emmaus.

ST. JOHN.

St. John, the writer of this Gospel, was son of Zebedee and Salome, and younger br of James the Great, with whom he was bro up as a fisherman, and with whom he was c to be a disciple and Apostle of Christ. St. has not recorded the circumstances of his own but we learn from the other three Evange Matt. iv. 21; Mark i. 19; Luke v. 10. that it place when he and his brother were fishing the sea of Galilee, and early in our Savi ministry. St. Mark, in enumerating the tv Apostles, informs us that our Saviour surna these two brothers Boanerges, Mark iii. 17. is, sons of thunder, which title we may unders as a prophetic declaration of the zeal and resol with which they would hereafter bear testimor the great truths of the Gospel. St. John was of the four Apostles to whom our Lord deli his predictions relative to the destruction of J salem, and the approaching calamities of Jewish nation, Mark xiii. 3. St. Peter, and James, and St. John, were chosen to accom our Saviour upon several occasions, when other Apostles were not permitted to be pre When Christ restored the daughter of Jair life, Mark v. 37; when he was transfigured o mount, Matt. xvii. 1, 2; Mark ix. 2; Luk

28; and when he endured his agony in the garden, Matt. xxvi. 36, 37; Mark. xiv. 32, 33; St. Peter, and St. James, and St. John, were his only attendants. St. Peter and St. John were entrusted to make preparations for our Saviour's eating the last passover, Mark. xiv. 13; Luke xxii. 8; but St. John alone had the distinction of leaning upon his master's bosom, and of being called the beloved disciple of the Saviour of mankind, John xxi. 20; xiii. 23. That he was treated by Christ with greater familiarity than the other Apostles, is evident from St. Peter desiring him to ask Christ who should betray him, when he himself did not dare to propose the question, John xiii. 24. He seems to have been the only Apostle present at the crucifixion, and to him Jesus, just as he was expiring on the cross, gave the strongest proof of his confidence and regard, by consigning to him the care of his mother, John xix. 26, 27. As St. John had been witness to the death of our Saviour, by seeing the blood and water issue from his side, which a soldier had pierced, John xix. 34, 35; so he was one of the first who were made acquainted with his resurrection. He believed without any hesitation this great event; though "as yet he knew not the Scripture, that Christ was to rise again from the dead," John xx. 9. He was one of those to whom our Saviour appeared at the sea of Galilee, and he was afterwards, with the other ten Apostles, a witness of his ascension into heaven, Mark xvi. 19; Luke xxiv. 51. St. John continued to preach the Gospel for some time at Jerusalem: he was imprisoned by the Sanhedrim, first with

St. Peter only, Acts iv. 1, &c., and afterwards with the other Apostles, Acts v. 17, 18. Some time after this, St. John and St. Peter were sent by the other Apostles to the Samaritans, whom Philip the deacon had converted to the Gospel, that through them "they might receive the Holy Ghost," Acts viii. 14, 15. With this journey the Scripture history of St. John ends, except that he informs us in the Revelation, that he was banished to Patmos, Rev. i. 9. an island in the Ægean sea.

It is universally agreed, that St. John published his Gospel in Asia; and that, when he wrote it, he had seen the other three Gospels; it is therefore not only valuable in itself, but also as a tacit confirmation of the other three, with none of which it disagrees in any material point.

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

This Book, in the very beginning, professes itself to be a continuation of St. Luke's Gospel, and its style bespeaks it to be written by the same person. The external evidence also is very satisfactory; for, besides allusions in earlier authors, and particularly in Clement of Rome, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr, the Acts of the Apostles are not only quoted by Irenæus, as written by St. Luke the Evangelist, but there are few things recorded in this book that are not mentioned by that ancient father. This strong testimony in favour of the genuineness of the Acts of the Apostles is supported by Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, St. Jerome,

Eusebius, Theodoret, and most of the later fathers. It may be added, that the name of St. Luke is prefixed to the book in several ancient Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, and also in the old Syriac version.

This is the only inspired work which gives us any historical account of the progress of Christianity after our Saviour's ascension. It comprehends a period of about thirty years, but it by no means contains a general history of the church during that time. The principal facts recorded in it are, the choice of Matthias to be an Apostle in the room of the traitor Judas; the descent of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost; the preaching, miracles, and sufferings of the Apostles at Jerusalem; the death of St. Stephen the first martyr; the persecution and dispersion of the Christians; the preaching of the gospel in different parts of Palestine, especially in Samaria; the conversion of St. Paul; the call of Cornelius, the first Gentile convert; the persecution of the Christians by Herod Agrippa; the preaching of St. Paul and St. Barnabas to the Gentiles by the express command of the Holy Ghost; the decree made at Jerusalem, declaring that circumcision and a conformity with other Jewish rites and ceremonies were not necessary in Gentile converts; and the latter part of the book is confined to the history of St. Paul, of whom St. Luke was the constant companion for several years.

As this account of St. Paul is not continued beyond his two years' imprisonment at Rome, it is probable that this book was written soon after his

release, which happened in the year 63 of the Christian era. We may therefore consider the Acts of the Apostles as written about the year 64.

It must have been of the utmost importance in the early times of the gospel, and certainly not of less importance to every subsequent age, to have an authentic account of the promised descent of the Holy Ghost, and of the success which attended the first preachers of the Gospel, both among the Jews and Gentiles. These great events completed the evidence of the Divine mission of Christ, established the truth and universality of the religion which he taught, and pointed out, in the clearest manner, the comprehensive nature of the redemption which he purchased by his death.

It appears that St. Luke's object in writing the book called the Acts of the Apostles, was not, either to deliver a general history of the propagation of Christianity, or a complete history of St. Paul in particular. He seems to have had a twofold object in view; namely, 1st, To relate in what manner the gifts of the Holy Spirit were communicated on the day of Pentecost, and the subsequent miracles performed by the Apostles, by which the truth of Christianity was confirmed. An authentic account of this matter was absolutely necessary, because Christ had so often assured his disciples that they should receive the Holy Spirit. Unbelievers therefore, whether Jews or heathens, might have made objections to our religion, if it had not been shewn that Christ's declaration was really fulfilled. 2nd, To deliver such accounts as proved the claim of the Gentiles to admission into

the church of Christ, a claim disputed by the Jews, especially at the time when St. Luke wrote the Acts of the Apostles. And it was this very circumstance which excited the hatred of the Jews against St. Paul, and occasioned his imprisonment in Rome, with which St. Luke closes his history. Hence we see the reason why he relates (chap. viii.) the conversion of the Samaritans, and (chap. x. xi.) the story of Cornelius, whom St. Peter baptized, though he was not of the circumcision. Hence also St. Luke relates the determination of the first council in Jerusalem, relative to the Levitical law; and, for the same reason, he is more diffuse in his account of St. Paul's conversion, and preaching the gospel to the Gentiles, than on any other subject. It is true that the whole relation which St. Luke has given at chap. xii. has no connexion with the conversion of the Gentiles; but, during the period to which that chapter relates, St. Paul himself was present at Jerusalem (see chap. xi. 30; xii. 25.); and it is probably for that reason that St. Luke has introduced it.

Although the author of this book has omitted many material parts of ecclesiastical history, in the first thirty years after the ascension, yet he is very circumstantial and perspicuous in those parts which he has related. In general, the style of the Acts of the Apostles is much purer than that of the other books of the New Testament, especially in the speeches delivered by St. Paul at Athens, and before the Roman governors. Still, this book is by no means free from Hebraisms; and even in

the purest parts, which are the speeches of St. Paul, we still find the language of a native Jew.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO

ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES.

St. Paul, the principal particulars of whose life are recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and are frequently alluded to by himself in his Epistles, was born at Tarsus, the principal city of Cilicia, and was by birth a Jew, a Hebrew of Hebrews, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin, and a Pharisee. He was also by birth a citizen of Rome, a distinguished honour and privilege which had been conferred on some of his ancestors for services rendered to the commonwealth during the wars. He was a distinguished persecutor of the Christians before his conversion, and bore a conspicuous part at the martyrdom of Stephen. His own miraculous conversion took place as he was on the way to Damascus, with power from the chief priests to bring back with him bound, any Christians he might find in that city. He was afterwards as much distinguished for his zeal in the cause of the gospel, as he had been formerly by his hatred to the professors of it; his boldness as a Christian preacher often bringing him into great danger. He was the great Apostle of the Gentiles. He and

Barnabas planted the first Gentile church at Antioch, where the professors of Christianity "were first called Christians." He and Barnabas were separated, by the express declaration of the Holy Ghost, to preach to the Gentiles. When he was converted, he went into Arabia, and three years afterwards returned to Damascus, from which place he went to Jerusalem to avoid the attempts of the Jews to kill him. He continued only fifteen days in Jerusalem, from which place the persecution of the Jews compelled him to fly. From that time, A. D. 39—58, he preached in various parts of Asia with success. He was rescued from a tumultuous assembly in Jerusalem by Lysias the tribune, and sent to Cæsarea, to be accused before Felix the Roman governor. Here he was detained two years; and appealing before Festus to the imperial tribunal, he was sent to Rome, A. D. 60, where he was confined two years. Beyond this we have no authentic record of him till his martyrdom. This is said to have taken place at Aquæ Salviæ, three miles from Rome, by decapitation, June 29, A. D. 66. It appears from the Acts and his Epistles that he made five journeys. *Vide* the following Table.

THE JOURNEYS OF ST. PAUL.

First Journey. A. D. 44—48. Acts xiii. xiv. xv. to verse 35.	Second Journey. A. D. 50—54. Acts xv. 36. to xviii. 22.	Third Journey. A. D. 54, 55. Acts xviii. 23. to xxi. 17.	Fourth Journey. A. D. 60—64. Acts xiii. 31. to xxviii.	Fifth Journey. A. D. 64 (or 65)—68. From the Epistles.
Antioch in Syria.	Rest of Syria.	Galatia.	Antipatris.	Colosse.
Seleucia.	Cilicia.	Ephesus.	Cæsarea.	Ephesus.
Salamis, Paphos } in Cyprus.	Derbe, Lystra, Iconium } in Lycaonia.	Troas.	Sidon.	Troas.
Perga in Pamphylia.	Phrygia.	Macedonia.	Myra in Lycia.	Philippi.
Antioch in Pisidia.	Galatia.	Greece.	Near Salmone, Fair Havens } in Crete.	Nicopolis in Epirus.
Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Iconium } in Lycaonia.	Troas.	(Corinth.)	Melita.	Corinth.
Antioch in Pisidia.	Samothrace.	Macedonia.	Syracuse in Sicily.	Miletus.
Perga, Attalia } in Pamphylia.	Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Berea } in Macedonia.	Philippi.	Rhegium, Puteoli, Appii Forum, Rome } in Italy.	Rome.
Antioch in Syria.		Troas.		
Phœnicia.		Assos.		
Samaria.	Athens, Corinth, Cenchrea } in Greece.	Mitylene in Lesbos.	End of the Acts.	
Jerusalem.	Ephesus in Ionia.	Chios.		
Antioch in Syria.	Cæsarea.	Samos.		
	Jerusalem.	Trogyllium, Miletus } in Ionia.		
	Antioch in Syria.	Coos.		
		Rhodes.		
		Patara in Lycia.		
		Tyre.		
		Ptolemais.		
		Cæsarea.		
		Jerusalem.		
			Italy.	
			Spain	
			Crete.	
			Jerusalem.	
			Antioch in Syria.	

The exertions of St. Paul in the cause of Christianity were not confined to personal instruction; he also wrote fourteen Epistles to individuals or churches, which are now extant, and form a part of our canon. In these letters of the Apostle, there are those obscurities and difficulties which belong to epistolary writing. Many circumstances are mentioned with brevity, and many opinions and facts are barely alluded to, as being well known to the persons whom he addresses, but which it is very difficult at this distant period to discover and ascertain. He does not formally announce the subjects which he means to discuss; he enters upon them abruptly, and makes frequent transitions without any intimations or notice; he answers objections without stating them, and abounds in parenthesis, which are not always easily discerned. Perspicuity, indeed, and a strict adherence to the rules of composition, were scarcely compatible with the fervour of his imagination, and the rapidity of his thoughts. "He is," says Mr. Locke, "full of the matter he treats; and writes with warmth, which usually neglects method, and those partitions and pauses, which men educated in the schools of rhetoricians usually observe." There is however a real connexion and coherence in all his writings and his reasoning, although it may sometimes seem to be desultory, will always be found to be correct and convincing. Instead of the beauties which arise from a nice arrangement of words, an harmonious cadence of periods, and an artificial structure of sentences, we have a style at once concise and highly figurative, and a striking peculiarity and

uncommon energy of language. When he speaks of the doctrines and excellency of the Christian religion, enlarges upon the nature and attributes of the Deity, or terrifies with the dread of Divine judgments, his style rises with the subject; and while our minds are impressed with the justness and the dignity of the sentiments, we cannot but admire the force and sublimity of the expressions. Though he never departs from the authority of the Apostolic character, yet the sensibility of his own heart frequently leads him to appeal to the feelings and affections of those to whom he writes; and the zeal of his temper is so constantly apparent throughout his Epistles, that no one can read them with attention without catching some portion of that fire by which he was animated.

Of the fourteen Epistles ascribed to St. Paul in our canon, the thirteen first have, in all ages of the church, been universally acknowledged to have been written by that Apostle. Some difference of opinion has prevailed respecting the years wherein the Epistles of St. Paul were written: the following synopsis is according to the dates given by Bishop Tomline in his Introduction to the Bible; and the places from which the several Epistles are supposed to have been written are annexed.

		A. D.
First Epistle to the Thessalonians, ...	from Corinth	52
Second ditto		
Epistle to the Galatians,	from Corinth or Macedonia	52

		A. D
'irst to the Corinthians	from Ephesus . . .	57
econd ditto	from Macedonia . .	57
omans	from Corinth	58
phesians	from Corinth	61
hilippians, olossians, hilemon	from Rome	62
lebrews	from Rome	63
'irst to Timothy	from Macedonia . .	64
Titus	from Greece or Macedonia	64
econd to Timothy . . .	from Rome	65

THE EPISTLE

TO THE

ROMANS.

This epistle was written from Corinth, probably the year of our Lord 58, being the fourth year he emperor Nero, just before St. Paul set out n thence for Jerusalem with the contributions, ch the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia had e for the relief of their poor brethren in Judea. as transcribed or written, as St. Paul dictated Tertius; and the person who conveyed it to was Phebe, a deaconess of the Church at urea, which was the eastern part of the city of h. It is addressed to the Church at Rome, consisted partly of Jewish, and partly of n converts: and throughout the epistle it is

evident that the Apostle has regard to both these descriptions of Christians.

St. Paul, when he wrote this epistle, had not been at Rome, but he had heard an account of the state of the church in that city from Aquila and Priscilla, two Christians who were banished from thence by the edict of Claudius, and with whom he lived during his first visit to Corinth. Whether any other Apostle had at this time preached the Gospel at Rome, cannot now be ascertained. Among those who witnessed the effect of the effusion of the Holy Ghost, are mentioned, "strangers of Rome, Jews, and Proselytes," that is, persons of the Jewish religion, who usually resided at Rome, but who had come to Jerusalem to be present at the feast of Pentecost. It is highly probable that these men, upon their return home, proclaimed the Gospel of Christ: and we may further suppose that many Christians, who had been converted in other places, afterwards settled at Rome, and were the cause of others embracing the Gospel.

But by whatever means Christianity had been introduced into Rome, it seems to have flourished in great purity; for we learn from the beginning of this epistle, that the faith of the Roman Christians was at this time much celebrated. To confirm them in that faith, and to guard them against the errors of Judaizing Christians, was the object of this letter, in which St. Paul takes occasion to enlarge upon the nature of the Mosaic institution; to explain the fundamental principles and doctrines of Christianity; and to shew that the whole human race, formerly divided into Jews and Gentiles, were

now to be admitted into the religion of Jesus, indiscriminately, and free from every other obligation.

The Apostle, after expressing his affection for the Roman Christians, and asserting that the gospel is the power of salvation to all who believe, takes a comprehensive view of the conduct and condition of men under the different dispensations of Providence; he shews that all mankind, both Jews and Gentiles, were equally "under sin," and liable to the wrath and punishment of God; that therefore there was a necessity for an universal propitiation and redemption, which were now offered to the whole race of men, without any preference or exception, by the mercy of him who is God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews; that faith in Jesus Christ, the universal Redeemer, was the only means of obtaining this salvation, which the deeds of the law were wholly incompetent to procure; that as the sins of the whole world originated from the disobedience of Adam, so the justification from those sins was to be derived from the obedience of Christ; that all distinction between Jew and Gentile was now abolished, and the ceremonial law entirely abrogated; that the unbelieving Jews would be excluded from the benefits of the gospel, while the believing Gentiles would be partakers of them; and that this rejection of the Jews, and call of the Gentiles, were predicted by the Jewish Prophets, Hosea and Isaiah. He then points out the superiority of the Christian over the Jewish religion, and earnestly exhorts the Romans to abandon every species of wickedness, and to practise the duties of righteousness and holiness, which were now en-

joined upon higher sanctions, and enforced by more powerful motives. In the latter part of the Epistle, St. Paul gives some practical instructions, and recommends some particular virtues; and he concludes with salutations, and a doxology.

Before we take into consideration the Epistle to the Romans in particular, it may not be amiss to premise, that the miraculous birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ, were all events that came to pass within the confines of Judea; and that the ancient writings of the Jewish nations, allowed by the Christians to be of divine original, were appealed to, as witnessing the truth of his mission and doctrine; whereby it was manifest that the Jews were the depositaries of the proofs of the Christian religion. This could not fail of giving to the Jews, who were owned to be the people of God, even in the days of our Saviour, a great authority among the convert Gentiles, who knew nothing of the Messiah they were to believe in, but what they derived from that nation, out of which he and his doctrine sprung. Nor did the Jews fail to make use of this advantage in several ways, to the disturbance of the Gentiles that embraced Christianity. The Jews, even those of them that received the gospel, were, for the most part, so devoted to the law of Moses and their ancient rites, that they could by no means bring themselves to think that they were to be laid aside. They were every where stiff and zealous for them, and contended they were necessary to be observed, even by Christians, by all that pretended to be the people of God, and hoped to be accepted by him.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

Corinth, situated on the isthmus which joins Peloponnesus to the rest of Greece, was, at the time when this epistle was written, a place of extensive commerce, and the capital of the Roman province of Achaia. Near it were celebrated the Isthmian games, to which the Apostle alludes in this epistle. Its inhabitants were a very licentious and profligate people, and were great admirers of the sceptical philosophy of the Greeks. St. Paul, in his first journey on the continent of Europe, resided at Corinth about eighteen months, and planted a church there, which consisted chiefly of converts from heathenism. After he left this city, some false teachers, who are supposed to have been Jews by birth, endeavoured to alienate the converts from their attachment to him and his doctrine, by calling in question the authority of his mission, and by ridiculing the plain and simple style in which he delivered his instructions. They recommended themselves to their hearers by shewing indulgence to their prejudices and vicious propensities, and by using those artificial ornaments of eloquence which had great effect upon their minds. Hence arose divisions and other irregularities amongst the Corin-

thian Christians, totally inconsistent with the genuine spirit of the gospel.

This epistle was written by the Apostle St. Paul from Ephesus, in the beginning of the year 56, during his second visit to that city, in the second year of Nero's reign, and about three years after he had left Corinth. The immediate occasion of its being written was to answer some questions which the Corinthians had in a letter proposed to St. Paul; but before he enters upon that subject, he takes notice of the abuses and disorders which prevailed in the church at Corinth, and of which he had received private information, 1 Cor. i. 11, 12; v. 1. He then exhorts them to harmony and union, and condemns the parties and factions into which they had formed themselves; he vindicates his own character, justifies the manner in which he had preached the gospel to them, and shews the futility of all human learning when compared with the excellency of the gospel of Christ, chap. ii. 1—9. He next orders that a man, who had married his father's wife, should be publicly excommunicated; and directs the Corinthians not to associate with any person of a notoriously wicked life, chap. v. He blames them for carrying their disputes before heathen courts of judicature, and advises them to settle their differences among themselves; he condemns the sin of fornication, and cautions them against sensual pleasures, to which the Corinthians were in general addicted in the highest degree, chap. vi.

After discussing these points, St. Paul proceeds to answer the questions which the Corinthians had

put to him; and he begins with those relating to the marriage state, upon which subject he gives a variety of directions, chap. vii. He then considers the lawfulness of Christians eating the meat of sacrifices offered to idols, chap. viii., and warns them against making the liberty which he allows an occasion of offence; he asserts his right as an Apostle to a maintenance from his disciples, although he had never accepted any money from the Corinthian converts; and, because the false teachers had contrived to make this disinterestedness a ground of reproach to St. Paul, he points out the superior motives by which the ministers of the gospel were animated to bear the hardships of their ministry, above those which induced the Greeks to submit to the labour of contending at the public games, chap. ix. He next directs that women should not pray or prophesy unveiled; and by this subject he is led to speak of some irregularities, of which the Corinthians had been guilty in celebrating the Lord's supper, but which were probably not noticed in the letter to the Apostle; and he afterwards gives an account of the institution of that sacrament, chap. x. xi. He then discourses concerning spiritual gifts, and explains the nature and extent of Christian charity, chap. xii. xiii. xiv. He enumerates the proofs of Christ's resurrection, deduces from it the certainty of the general resurrection of the dead, and in a forcible strain of eloquence answers some objections which were urged against that fundamental doctrine of the Gospel, chap. xv. In the last chapter St. Paul gives directions concerning the collections to be made for the

poor Christians of Judea; promises to visit the Corinthians, and concludes with friendly admonitions and salutations.

From this summary account, it appears that this epistle relates principally to the then state of the church at Corinth; but the truths and instructions which it contains are of the greatest importance to Christians of every age and country.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

TO THE

CORINTHIANS.

It appears from the history of St. Paul, that soon after the tumult occasioned by Demetrius, St. Paul left Ephesus, went to Troas, and thence into Macedonia, where he met Titus, who was just come from Corinth, whither he had been sent by St. Paul with his first epistle, and with directions to inquire into the state of the church in that city From Titus St. Paul learned that his letter was well received by the Corinthian Christians; that the greater part of them had expressed much concern for their past behaviour; that they had given full proof of their attachment to him, and in particular that they had, in obedience to his commands, excommunicated the person who had been guilty of an incestuous marriage; but that some of them still adhered to the false teachers, who continued

to deny St. Paul's apostolical mission, and used every other means in their power to lessen his credit with the Corinthians. St. Paul's former letter having produced these good effects among the Corinthians, he thought it expedient to write to them again, for the purpose of confirming them in their right conduct, and to give them some farther advice and instruction, especially with reference to the attempts which were still making to pervert their faith, and of which he had lately received a circumstantial account from Titus.

This second epistle to the Corinthians was written from Macedonia, within twelve months after the first, and probably in the beginning of the year 57; and it was sent to Corinth by Titus, who with other persons was returning thither to forward the collections in Achaia for the poor Christians of Judea.

St. Paul writes in his own name, and in that of Timothy, who was now with him in Macedonia; and addresses not only the Christians of Corinth, but of all Achaia: he begins with speaking of the consolations which he had experienced under his sufferings, and of the sincerity and zeal with which he had preached the gospel; he explains the reason of his not having performed his promise of visiting the Corinthians, and assures them the delay had proceeded, not from levity or fickleness, as perhaps his enemies had represented, but from tenderness towards his converts at Corinth, to give them time to reform, and that there might be no occasion for treating them with severity when he saw them; he notices the case of the incestuous person, and on

account of his repentance desires that he may be forgiven, and restored to communion with the church; he mentions the success with which he had preached; he enlarges upon the importance of the ministerial office, the zeal and faithfulness with which he had discharged his duty, and the excellence of the gospel doctrines; he cautions them against connexions with unbelievers; he expresses great regard for the Corinthians; declares that he had felt much anxiety and concern, on account of the irregularities which had prevailed among them; and that he rejoiced very much upon being informed of their penitence and amendment: and he exhorts them to contribute liberally to the relief of their poor brethren in Judea. In the latter part of the epistle he again vindicates his character as an Apostle, and enumerates the various species of distress and persecutions which he had undergone in the cause of Christianity. He concludes with general exhortations, and the well known benediction in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

THE EPISTLE

TO THE

GALATIANS

THE country of Galatia was part of Asia Minor, and derived its name from the Gauls, who, about two hundred and forty years before Christ, took possession of it by force of arms, and settled

there. There is a great difference of opinion among the learned concerning the date of this Epistle, some supposing that it was written as early as the year 52, and others, as late as the year 58. There is, however, an expression in the beginning, which appears to fix its date with a considerable degree of probability: "I marvel," says the Apostle, "that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." This passage seems to prove, that the epistle was written soon after the Galatians were converted to Christianity. From the history of St. Paul it appears, that he preached in Galatia in the year 51, in the course of his second apostolical journey; and again in the year 53, in his third journey. No mention is made in this epistle of St. Paul having been twice in Galatia, and therefore I conclude that it was written in the interval between his two visits, and most probably in the year 52, while he was at Corinth; or it might have been written, as Michaelis thinks, in Macedonia, before St. Paul went to Corinth.

Not long after St. Paul had converted the Galatians to the belief of the gospel, some Judaizing Christians endeavoured, with considerable success, to persuade them of the necessity of being circumcised, and of observing the law of Moses; for this purpose they urged, without any foundation, the authority of the Apostles and elders at Jerusalem; they represented St. Paul as having an inferior commission, derived from the church at Jerusalem. and that even he in certain cases had allowed of

circumcision. The object of this epistle, which was written in a strain of indignant complaint, was to counteract the impression made by these false teachers, and re-establish the Galatians in the true Christian faith and practice.

St. Paul begins, after a salutation in the name of himself and all the brethren who were with him, by asserting his Apostolical mission; he shews, from a brief history of his life, that he learnt the gospel, not from man, but by immediate revelation from God; and that he entered upon his ministry by divine appointment, without receiving any instruction or authority from those who were Apostles before him, or at first holding any communication with them; that he afterwards conferred with the heads of the church at Jerusalem, and was by them, upon the fullest conviction, acknowledged to be an Apostle through the especial grace of God. St. Paul having thus proved the independency and divine original of his mission, and that he was "not a whit behind the very chiefest Apostles," 2 Cor. xi. 5, proceeds to refute the imputation of inconsistency with which he had been charged, by shewing that he had uniformly resisted the Judaizing Christians, and in particular that he had withstood and reproved St Peter at Antioch, who through fear of the Jewish Christians had refused to associate with heathen converts; he contends, that he had always maintained the gospel was alone able to save those who believe it, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, chap. i. and ii.; he expostulates with the Galatians for

having suffered themselves to be seduced by false teachers from the doctrines which he had taught them, and brings to their recollection that, upon their embracing the gospel, and not the law, they had received the Holy Ghost, chap. iii. 1—5. He then pursues the main subject of the epistle at considerable length, and proves that the obligation of the ritual part of the Mosaic law is completely abolished, both with respect to Jews and Gentiles, chap. iii. 6, to the end of chap. iv.; and in the course of his argument he contrasts the present defection of the Galatians with their former zeal and affection towards him, and expresses a fear lest he should have preached to them in vain; he earnestly exhorts them to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ had made them free, and not to suffer themselves again to be entangled with the bondage of legal ordinances; he points out the moral and spiritual nature of the Gospel, in opposition to outward observances; and concludes with a variety of directions and precepts, all tending to the cultivation of practical virtue, chap. v. and vi.

St. Paul wrote this epistle with his own hand, although it was his common practice to make use of a person to write for him.

It may be proper to remark, that the doctrine contained in this epistle goes farther than the decree of the council at Jerusalem, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. In this epistle St. Paul maintains, that no persons, whether Jews or Gentiles, after they had embraced the gospel, ought to consider the observance of the Mosaic law as

essential to their salvation, or as contributing to a greater degree of perfection; and he says to the Galatian Christians, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law;" that is, whoever relies upon legal ordinances, as the means of his justification, will lose all the benefits of the profession of the Gospel; whereas the decree only decided, that it was not necessary for Gentile converts to Christianity to be circumcised, or to conform to the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic institution.

The subject and design of this epistle is much the same with that of his Epistle to the Romans, but treated in somewhat a different manner. The business of it being to dehort and hinder the Galatians from bringing themselves under the bondage of the Mosaical law.

St. Paul himself had planted the churches of Galatia; and therefore referring (as he does in chap. i. 8, 9.) to what he had before taught them, he does not, in this epistle, lay down at large to them the doctrine of the gospel, as he does in that to the Romans, who having been converted to the Christian faith by others, he did not know how far they were instructed in all those particulars, which on the occasion whereon he wrote to them it might be necessary for them to understand: and therefore, writing to the Romans, he sets before them a large and comprehensive view of the chief heads of the Christian religion. He also deals more roundly with his disciples the Galatians, than, we may observe, he does with the Romans, to whom he,

being a stranger, writes not in so familiar a style, nor in his reproofs and exhortations uses so much the tone of a master, as he does to the Galatians.

THE EPISTLE

TO THE

EPHESIANS.

Ephesus, a city of Ionia, and the capital of the proconsular Asia, was famous for its temple of Diana, which was esteemed one of the seven wonders of the world; and its inhabitants were noted for their superstition and skill in magic. St. Paul preached the gospel for a short time at Ephesus, in the year 53; and in the following year he returned thither, and remained there more than two years. During this long residence he made many converts to Christianity, who seem to have been distinguished by their piety and their zeal.

This Epistle contains no blame or complaint whatever; and its sole object appears to have been, to confirm the Ephesian Christians in the true faith and practice of the gospel. It was written while St. Paul was a prisoner the first time at Rome; and the Apostle does not express in it any hope of a speedy release, which he does in his other epistles sent from thence: it is conjectured that it was written during the early part of his confinement, and probably in the year 61. It might perhaps be occasioned by intelligence which the Apostle had received concerning the Ephesians, from persons

who had lately come out of Asia, chap. i. 15. It was sent to Ephesus by Tychicus. It is written with great animation, and has been always much admired both for the importance of its matter and the elegance of its composition.

This epistle consists of six chapters, the three first of which are usually considered as doctrinal, and the other three as practical. St. Paul, after saluting the saints at Ephesus, expresses his gratitude to God for the blessings of the gospel dispensation, and assures the Ephesians, that since he heard of their faith in Christ Jesus, and of their love to all Christians, he had not ceased to return thanks for them, and to pray that their minds might be still farther enlightened, chap. i.; he points out the excellence of the gospel dispensation, and shews that redemption through Christ is to be ascribed solely to the grace of God, chap. ii.; he declares the mystery, or hidden purpose of God to be, that the Gentiles as well as the Jews should be partakers of the blessings of the gospel, and that through the goodness of God he was appointed to be the Apostle of the Gentiles; he desires the Ephesians not to be dejected on account of his sufferings, and closes this part of the epistle with an affectionate prayer and a sublime doxology, chap. iii. In the three last chapters, St. Paul gives the Ephesians many practical exhortations; and in particular, he recommends union, purity of manners, veracity, and meekness, chap. iv.; he enjoins charity, and forbids every species of licentiousness; he enforces the duties of wives, of husbands, chap. v.; of children, of servants; he

recommends watchfulness and firmness in the Christian warfare, and concludes the epistle with a general benediction, chap. vi.

THF EPISTLE

TO THE

PHILIPPIANS.

PHILIPPI was a city of Macedonia, and a Roman colony, not far from the borders of Thrace. It was the first place at which St. Paul preached the gospel upon the continent of Europe, in the year 51. He made many converts there, who soon afterwards gave strong proofs of their attachment to him, chap. iv. 15. He was at Philippi a second time, but nothing which then occurred is recorded.

The Philippian Christians, having heard of St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, with their accustomed zeal sent Epaphroditus to assure him of the continuance of their regard, and to offer him a supply of money. This epistle was written in consequence of that act of kindness; and it is remarkable for its strong expressions of affection. As the Apostle tells the Philippians, that he hoped to see them shortly, chap. ii. 24, and there are plain intimations (chap. i. 12, and ii. 26.) in the epistle, of his having been some time at Rome, it is probable that it was written in the year 62, towards the end of his confinement.

St. Paul, after a salutation in his own name and that of Timothy, declares his thankfulness to God

for having made the Philippians partakers of the blessings of the gospel, and prays for their farther improvement in knowledge and righteousness; he informs them that his confinement had contributed to the furtherance of the gospel, and declares his readiness to die in its cause, or live for its promotion; he exhorts them, with great warmth and earnestness, to live as it becometh the gospel of Christ, being in nothing terrified by their adversaries, chap. i.; to live in harmony with each other, and to practise the virtue of humility after the example of Christ: he encourages them to work out their salvation, and expresses his intention of sending Timothy to them soon, and some hope of visiting them himself; in the mean time he tells them, that he had sent back Epaphroditus their messenger, who had been detained at Rome by a dangerous illness, chap. ii.; he cautions them against false teachers, with particular reference to Judaizers, and gives some account of himself and of his zeal for the gospel, which he advises the Philippians to imitate. In the last chapter he adds farther exhortations, expresses his satisfaction and thankfulness for their liberality, and concludes with salutations, and his usual benediction.

THE EPISTLE

TO THE

COLOSSIANS.

The Christians of Colosse, a city of Phrygia, in Asia Minor, having heard of St. Paul's imprison-

ment at Rome, sent Epaphras thither to inform him of the estate of their affairs, and to inquire after his welfare. In return for that mark of attention, St. Paul, while he was still in confinement, and probably in the year 62, wrote this Epistle to the Colossians, and sent it to them by Tychicus and Onesimus. Epaphras was cast into prison after his arrival at Rome; and it is generally supposed that he had provoked the displeasure of the Roman government by his zeal in preaching the gospel.

This epistle greatly resembles that to the Ephesians, both in sentiment and expression. After saluting the Colossian Christians in his own name, and that of Timothy, St. Paul assures them, that since he had heard of their faith in Christ Jesus, and of their love to the Christians, he had not ceased to return thanks to God for them, and to pray that they might increase in spiritual knowledge, and abound in every good work; he describes the dignity of Christ, and declares the universality of the gospel dispensation, which was a mystery formerly hidden, but now made manifest; and he mentions his own appointment, through the grace of God, to be the Apostle of the Gentiles; he expresses a tender concern for the Colossians and other Christians of Phrygia, and cautions them against being seduced from the simplicity of the gospel by the subtilty of Pagan philosophers, or the superstition of Judaizing Christians, chap. i. ii.; he directs them to set their affections on things above, and forbids every species of licentiousness; he exhorts to a variety of Christian virtues, to

meekness, veracity, humility, charity, and devotion; he enforces the duties of wives, husbands, children, fathers, servants, and masters, chap. iii.; he inculcates the duty of prayer, and of prudent behaviour towards unbelievers; and after adding the salutations of several persons then at Rome, and desiring that this Epistle might be read in the church of their neighbours the Laodiceans, he concludes with a salutation from himself, written as usual with his own hand, chap. iv.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

It is recorded in the Acts, chap. xvii. 1—9, that St. Paul, in his first journey upon the continent of Europe, preached the gospel at Thessalonica, at that time the capital of Macedonia, with considerable success; but that, after a short stay, he was driven thence by the malice and violence of the unbelieving Jews. From Thessalonica St. Paul went to Berea, and thence to Athens, at both which places he remained but a very short time. From Athens he sent Timothy to Thessalonica, to confirm the new converts in the faith, and to inquire into their conduct. Timothy upon his return found St. Paul at Corinth. Thence probably, in the year 52, St. Paul wrote this epistle to the Thessalonians; and it is to be supposed that the subjects of which he treats were suggested

by the account which he received from Timothy. It is now generally believed that this was written the first of all St. Paul's epistles, but it is not known by whom it was sent to Thessalonica. The church there consisted chiefly of Gentile converts, chap. i. 9. St. Paul, after saluting the Thessalonian Christians in the name of himself, Silas, and Timothy, assures them that he constantly returned thanks to God on their account, and mentioned them in his prayers; he acknowledges the readiness and sincerity with which they embraced the gospel, and the great reputation they had acquired by turning from idols to serve the living God, chap. i.; he reminds them of the bold and disinterested manner in which he had preached among them; comforts them under the persecutions which they, like other Christians, had experienced from their unbelieving countrymen, and informs them of two ineffectual attempts which he had made to visit them again, chap. ii.: and that, being thus disappointed, he had sent Timothy to confirm their faith, and inquire into their conduct; he tells them that Timothy's account of them had given him the greatest consolation and joy in the midst of his affliction and distress, and that he continually prayed to God for an opportunity of seeing them again, and for their perfect establishment in the gospel, chap. iii.; he exhorts to purity, justice, love, and quietness, and dissuades them against excessive grief for their deceased friends; hence he takes occasion to recommend preparation for the last judgment, the time of

which is always uncertain, and adds a variety of practical precepts.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

TO THE

THESSALONIANS.

It is generally believed that the messenger who carried the former epistle into Macedonia, upon his return to Corinth, informed St. Paul that the Thessalonians had inferred, from some expressions in it (1 Thess. iv. 15, 17; v. 6.), that the coming of Christ and the final judgment were near at hand, and would happen in the time of many who were then alive. The principal design of the second Epistle to the Thessalonians was to correct that error, and prevent the mischief which it would naturally occasion. It was written from Corinth, and probably at the end of the year 52.

St. Paul begins with the same salutation as in the former epistle, and then expresses his devout acknowledgments to God for the increasing faith and mutual love of the Thessalonians in the midst of persecutions; he represents to them the rewards which will be bestowed upon the faithful, and the punishment which will be inflicted upon the disobedient at the coming of Christ, chap. i.: he earnestly entreats them not to suppose, as upon any authority from him, or upon any other ground, that the last day is at hand: he assures them, that before that awful period a great apostasy will take

place; and reminds them of some information which he had given them on that subject, when he was at Thessalonica: he exhorts them to steadfastness in their faith, and prays God to comfort their hearts, and establish them in every good word and work, chap. ii.: he desires their prayers for the success of his ministry, and expresses his confidence in their sincerity: he cautions them against associating with idle and disorderly persons, and recommends diligence and quietness.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

TO

TIMOTHY.

TIMOTHY was a native of Lystra in Lycaonia: his father was a Gentile; but his mother, whose name was Eunice, was a Jewess, Acts xvi. 1, and educated her son with great care in her own religion, 2 Tim. iii. 15. In the beginning of this epistle St. Paul calls Timothy his "own son in the faith," chap. i. 2; from which expression it is inferred, that St. Paul was the person who converted him to the belief of the gospel; and as, upon the Apostle's second arrival at Lystra, Timothy is mentioned as being then a disciple, and as having distinguished himself among the Christians of that neighbourhood, his conversion, as well as that of Eunice his mother, and Lois his grandmother, must have taken place when St. Paul first preached at Lystra in the year 46. Upon

St. Paul's leaving Lystra, in the course of
second apostolical journey, he was induced to
Timothy with him, on account of his exce
character, and the zeal which, young as he
he had already shewn in the cause of Christia
but before they set out, the Apostle caused hi
be circumcised, not as a thing necessary to
salvation, but to avoid giving offence to the J
as he was a Jew by his mother's side, and cir
cision under such circumstances was agreeabl
the Jewish principles. Timothy was regu
appointed to the ministerial office by laying o
hands, not only by St. Paul himself, 2 Tim.
but also by the presbytery, 1 Tim. iv. 14. I
this time Timothy constantly acted as a min
of the gospel: he generally attended St. I
but was sometimes employed by him in c
places: he was very diligent and useful; ar
always mentioned with great esteem and affe
by the Apostle, who joins his name with his
in the inscription of six of his epistles; nam
the second to the Corinthians, Philippians, C
sians, first and second to the Thessalonians,
Philemon. He was bishop of Ephesus; and it
been said, that he suffered martyrdom in that
some years after the death of St. Paul.

Concerning the date of this epistle the lea
are by no means agreed. It was most prob
written soon after St. Paul's first imprisonmer
Rome, and therefore after the period at which
Acts of the Apostles end, somewhere about
year 64.

The principal design of it was to give instruct

to Timothy concerning the management of the church of Ephesus: and it was probably intended to be read publicly to the Ephesians, that they might know on what authority Timothy acted. After saluting him in an affectionate manner, and reminding him of the reason for which he was left at Ephesus, the Apostle takes occasion from the frivolous disputes which some Judaizing teachers had introduced among the Ephesians, to assert the practical nature of the gospel, and to shew its superiority over the law: he returns thanks to God for his own appointment to the Apostleship, and recommends to Timothy fidelity in the discharge of his sacred office, chap. i.: he exhorts that prayers should be made for all men, and especially for magistrates: he gives directions for the conduct of women, and forbids their teaching in public, chap. ii.: he describes the qualifications necessary for bishops and deacons, and speaks of the mysterious nature of the gospel dispensation, chap. iii.: he foretells that there will be apostates from the truth, and false teachers in the latter times, and recommends to Timothy purity of manners and improvement of his spiritual gifts, chap. iv.: he gives him particular directions for his behaviour towards persons in different situations of life, and instructs him in several points of Christian discipline, chap. v.: he cautions him against false teachers, gives him several precepts, and solemnly charges him to be faithful to his trust, chap. vi.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

TO

TIMOTHY.

THAT this Epistle was written while St. was under confinement at Rome, appears from two following passages: "Be not thou ther ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of his prisoner:" "The Lord give mercy unto house of Onesiphorus, for he oft refreshed me, was not ashamed of my chain; but when he in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, found me." And if we have done rightly in da the first epistle to Timothy after St. Paul's imprisonment at Rome, it will follow that second epistle must have been written during second imprisonment in that city, and probabl the year 65; not long before his death. It is b means certain where Timothy was when epistle was written to him. It seems most bable that he was somewhere in Asia Minor, s St. Paul desires him to bring the cloak with which he had left at Troas, chap. iv. 13.; and at the end of the first chapter he speaks of sev persons whose residence was in Asia. Many thought that he was at Ephesus; but others rejected that opinion, because Troas does not l the way from Ephesus to Rome, whither he directed to go as quickly as he could.

St. Paul, after his usual salutation, assures Timothy of his most affectionate remembrance; he speaks of his own apostleship, and of his sufferings; exhorts Timothy to be steadfast in the true faith; to be constant and diligent in the discharge of his ministerial office; to avoid foolish and unlearned questions; and to practise and inculcate the great duties of the gospel, chap. ii.: he describes the apostacy and general wickedness of the last days, and highly commends the holy Scriptures, chap. iii.: he again solemnly exhorts Timothy to diligence; speaks of his own danger, and of his hope of future reward; and concludes with several private directions, and with salutations.

THE EPISTLE

TO

TITUS.

It is remarkable that Titus is not mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles. The few particulars which are known of him are collected from the epistles of St. Paul. We learn from them, that he was a Greek, Gal. ii. 3; but it is not recorded to what city or country he belonged. From St. Paul's calling him "his own son after the common faith," Tit. i. 4, it is concluded that he was converted by the Apostle; but we have no account of the time or place of his conversion. He is first mentioned as going from Antioch to the council at Jerusalem in the year 49, Gal. ii. 1, &c.; and upon that oc-

casion St. Paul says that he would not allow him to be circumcised, because he was born of Gentile parents. He probably accompanied St. Paul in his second apostolical journey, and from that time he seems to have been constantly employed by him in the propagation of the gospel; he calls him "his partner and fellow-helper," 2 Cor. viii. 23. St. Paul sent him from Ephesus with his first epistle to the Corinthians, and with a commission to inquire into the state of the church at Corinth: and he sent him thither again from Macedonia, with his second epistle, and to forward the collection for "the saints in Judea." From this time we hear nothing of Titus, till he was left by St. Paul in Crete, after his first imprisonment at Rome, to "set in order the things that were wanting, and to ordain elders in every city," Tit. i. 5. It is probable that he went thence to join St. Paul at Nicopolis, Tit. iii. 12: that they went together to Crete to visit the churches there, and thence to Rome. During St. Paul's second imprisonment at Rome, Titus went into Dalmatia, 2 Tim. iv. 10: and after the Apostle's death he is said to have returned into Crete, and to have died there in the ninety-fourth year of his age. He is often called bishop of Crete by ecclesiastical writers. St. Paul always speaks of Titus in terms of high regard; and entrusted him, as we have seen, with commissions of great importance.

It is by no means certain from what place St. Paul wrote this epistle. But as he desires Titus to come to him at Nicopolis, most probably the city so called in Epirus, and declares his intention of

passing the winter there, some have supposed that when he wrote it he was in the neighbourhood of that city, either in Greece or Macedonia; others have imagined that he wrote it from Colosse, but it is difficult to say upon what ground. It was probably written about the year 64.

It is not known at what time a Christian church was first planted in Crete: but as some Cretans were present at the first effusion of the Holy Ghost at Jerusalem, Acts ii. 11, it is not improbable that at their return home they might be the means of introducing the gospel among their countrymen. Crete is said to have abounded with Jews: and from the latter part of the first chapter of this epistle it appears, that many of them were persons of very profligate lives, even after they had embraced the gospel.

The principal design of this epistle was to give instructions to Titus concerning the management of the churches in the different cities of the island of Crete; and it was probably intended to be read publicly to the Cretans, that they might know upon what authority Titus acted. St. Paul after his usual salutation intimates, that he was appointed an Apostle by the express command of God, and reminds Titus of the reason of his being left in Crete: he describes the qualifications necessary for bishops, and cautions him against persons of bad principles, especially Judaizing teachers, whom he directs Titus to rebuke with severity, chap. i.; he informs him what instructions he should give to people in different situations of life, and exhorts him to be exemplary in his own conduct; he points

out the pure and practical nature of the gospel, chap. ii. and enumerates some particular virtues which he was to inculcate, avoiding foolish questions and frivolous disputes: he tells him how he is to behave towards heretics, and concludes with salutations, chap. iii.

THE EPISTLE

TO

PHILEMON.

PHILEMON was an inhabitant of Colosse; and from the manner in which he is addressed in this epistle, it is probable that he was a person of some consideration in that city. St. Paul seems to have been the means of converting him to the belief of the gospel, ver. 19. He calls him his fellow-labourer; and from that expression some have thought that he was bishop or deacon of the church at Colosse; but others have been of opinion that he was only a private Christian, who had shewn a zealous and active disposition in the cause of Christianity, without holding any ecclesiastical office.

From some expressions in the epistle itself, and from some other circumstances, it appears to have been written towards the end of St. Paul's first confinement at Rome.

The occasion of writing it was this: Onesimus, a slave of Philemon, had run away from him, and taken up his residence at Rome. St. Paul having

there met with him, converted him to Christianity, and reclaimed him to a sense of his duty: he then sent him back to Colosse with this letter, written with his own hand to Philemon, requesting him to receive his slave, thus converted and reclaimed, again into his family.

This epistle has always been deservedly admired for the delicacy and address with which it is written: and it places St. Paul's character in a very amiable point of view. He had converted a fugitive slave to the Christian faith; and he here intercedes with his master in the most earnest and affectionate manner for his pardon; he speaks of Onesimus in terms calculated to soften Philemon's resentment, engages to make full compensation for any injury which he might have sustained from him, and conjures him to reconciliation and forgiveness by the now endearing connexion of Christian brotherhood.

This epistle is a plain proof, that Christianity was not intended to make any alteration in the civil conditions of men. St. Paul considered Onesimus, although converted to the gospel, as still belonging to his former master; and by deprecating the anger of Philemon, he acknowledged that Onesimus continued liable to punishment for the misconduct of which he had been guilty previously to his conversion.

THE EPISTLE

TO THE

HEBREWS.

THE testimony of all ancient copies and translations, with the concurrent suffrage of the best writers, both ancient and modern, gives such evidence for St. Paul's being the author of this excellent epistle, that the objections, or rather scruples, brought to the contrary, are of no weight.

St. Paul has omitted his name from the commencement of this epistle: having probably reasons for departing upon this occasion from his usual mode of salutation, which we at this distant period cannot discover. Some have imagined, that he omitted his name, because he knew that it would not have much weight with the Hebrew Christians, to whom he was in general obnoxious, on account of his zeal in converting the Gentiles, and in maintaining that the observance of the Mosaic law was not essential to salvation. It is however clear that the persons to whom the epistle was addressed, knew from whom it came, as the writer refers to some acts of kindness which he had received from them, chap. x. 34, and also expresses a hope of seeing them soon, chap. xiii. 18, 19, 23.

That this epistle was written from Italy is manifest from this expression at the end of it, "They of Italy salute you:" and it is supposed to have been written towards the end of St. Paul's

imprisonment at Rome, or immediately after it, because the Apostle expresses an intention of visiting the Hebrews shortly; we therefore place the date of the epistle about the year 63.

There has been some little doubt concerning the persons to whom this epistle was addressed: but by far the most general and most probable opinion is, that it was written to those Christians of Judea who had been converted to the gospel from Judaism. That it was written, notwithstanding its general title, to the Christians of one certain place or country, is evident from the following passages: "I beseech you the rather to do this, that I may be restored to you the sooner," chap. xiii. 19: "Know ye that our brother Timothy is set at liberty, with whom, if he come shortly, I will see you," chap. xiii. 23. And it appears from the Acts of the Apostles, chap. vi. 1, that certain persons were at this time known at Jerusalem by the name of "Hebrews." They seem to have been native Jews, inhabitants of Judea, the language of which country was Hebrew; and therefore they were called Hebrews, in contradistinction to those Jews, who, residing commonly in other countries, although they occasionally came to Jerusalem, used the Greek language, and were therefore called "Grecians."

The general design of this epistle was to confirm the Jewish Christians in the faith and practice of the gospel, which they might be in danger of deserting, either through the persuasion or persecution of the unbelieving Jews, who were very numerous and powerful in Judea. We may natu-

rally suppose, that the zealous adherents to the law would insist on the majesty and glory which attended its first promulgation, on the distinguished character of their legislator Moses, and on the divine authority of the ancient Scriptures; and they might likewise urge the humiliation and death of Christ, as an argument against the truth of his religion. To obviate the impression, which any reasoning of this sort might make upon the converts to Christianity, the Apostle begins his epistle with declaring to the Hebrews, that the same God, who had formerly, upon a variety of occasions, spoken to their fathers by means of his Prophets, had now sent his only Son for the purpose of revealing his will: he then describes, in most sublime language, the dignity of the person of Christ, chap. i.; and thence infers the duty of obeying his commands, the divine authority of which was established by the performance of miracles, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost; he points out the necessity of Christ's incarnation and passion, chap. ii.; he shews the superiority of Christ to Moses, and warns the Hebrews against the sin of unbelief, chap. iii.; he exhorts to steadfastness in the profession of the gospel, and gives an animated description of Christ, as our high priest, chap. iv.—vii.: he shews that the Levitical priesthood and the old covenant were abolished by the priesthood of Christ, and by the new covenant, chap. viii.; he points out the inefficacy of the ceremonies and sacrifices of the law, and the sufficiency of the atonement made by the sacrifice of Christ, chap. ix. x.; he fully

explains the nature, value, and effects of faith, chap. xi.: and in the two last chapters he gives a variety of exhortations and admonitions, all calculated to encourage the Hebrews to bear with patience and constancy any trials to which they might be exposed. He concludes with the valedictory benediction usual in St. Paul's Epistles, "Grace be with you all. Amen."

In this celebrated epistle the most important articles of our faith are explained, and the most material objections to the gospel are answered with great force. The arguments used in it, as being addressed to persons who had been educated in the Jewish religion, are principally taken from the ancient Scriptures; and the connexion between former revelations and the gospel of Christ is pointed out in the most perspicuous and satisfactory manner.

OF THE

SEVEN CATHOLIC EPISTLES.

THE Epistle of St. James, the two Epistles of St. Peter, the three Epistles of St. John, and the Epistle of St. Jude, are called Catholic or General Epistles. They are mentioned by many ancient authors under that name; and they were probably so called, because most of them were written, not to particular persons, or to the churches of single cities or countries, as St. Paul's epistles were, but to several churches, or to believers in general.

THE EPISTLE
OF
JAMES.

In the catalogue of the Apostles given by the Evangelists we find two persons of the name of James, of whom one was son of Zebedee and brother of John, and the other was son of Alpheus or Cleophas, which are supposed to be the same name differently written, or different names for the same person. The latter James is in the Gospels called James the Less, Mark xv. 40; and the former is distinguished by the name of James the Great, though that appellation is not given him in Scripture. St. Paul mentions one of these two Apostles as "the Lord's brother," Gal. i. 19, that is, his near kinsman. And as there is no reason to think that the son of Zebedee was related to Christ, we conclude that he speaks of the son of Alpheus, who in other places of Scripture is said to be the brother of Christ, Matt. xiii. 55; Mark vi. 3. The degree of his relation to Christ seems to have been that of cousin-german, for St. John says, that Mary the wife of Cleophas was sister to Mary our Saviour's mother, John xix. 25: and St. Mark informs us, that the name of the mother of James the Less was Mary, Mark xv. 40.

James the Less was the author of this Epistle. We have no account of his call to the Apostleship, nor are any particulars recorded of him in the

Gospels. In the Acts, and in St. Paul's Epistles, he is several times mentioned with great distinction; Acts xii. 17; xv. 13; xxi. 18; 1 Cor. xv. 7; Gal. i. 19; ii. 9, 12: but not in a manner to furnish us with many circumstances of his history. He seems to have been appointed by the other Apostles, probably soon after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, to reside at Jerusalem, and to superintend the affairs of the church there, while the rest of the Apostles travelled into other countries. His near relation to our Saviour was probably the cause of his being selected for this honourable station, the duties of which he discharged with such inflexible integrity and holy zeal, that he obtained the appellation of James the Just. By ancient writers he is called Bishop of Jerusalem, and is considered as presiding in that character at the council held at Jerusalem, for the purpose of determining whether it was necessary that Gentile converts to the gospel should be circumcised. Upon that occasion he was the last who delivered his sentiments; and he summed up the arguments, and proposed the substance of the decree, to which the whole assembly readily acceded. He was put to death in the year 62, in a tumult raised by the unbelieving Jews, when there was no Roman governor in Judea, Festus being dead, and his successor Albinus not yet arrived.

This epistle is generally believed to have been written a short time before the death of St. James; and therefore we may place the date of it with great probability about the year 61.

The immediate design of the epistle was to

animate the Jewish Christians to support, v
fortitude and patience, any sufferings to which t
might be exposed, and to enforce the genuine d
trines and practice of the gospel, in opposition
the errors and vices which then prevailed am
them. The principal source of these errors
vices was a misinterpretation of St. Paul's doct
of justification by faith without the works of
law; that is, as the Apostle meant it, without
observance of the rites and ceremonies of the Mo
dispensation: but hence some had most unwarr
ably inferred, that moral duties were not esse
to salvation, and had therefore abandoned th
selves to every species of licentiousness and
fligacy.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

OF

PETER.

Simon Peter was born at Bethsaida, a cit
Upper Galilee, John i. 44. His father's name
Jonas, and he had a brother called Andrew.
was a married man, and lived at Capernaum;
he and his brother were fishermen upon the
of Gennesareth. Andrew was a disciple of
the Baptist; and hearing him declare Jesus t
"the Lamb of God," he followed Jesus, and
tinued with him the rest of that day. And
having found his brother, took him to Jesus, v
when he saw him, said, "Thou art Simon

son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas (or Peter), which is by interpretation, a stone" or rock, John i. 42. Though Peter and Andrew seem to have been now convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, yet they continued to carry on their trade of fishing, till Christ called them to attend constantly upon himself, and promised to make them "fishers of men," Matt. iv. 19; in allusion to the success which they should have in making converts to the gospel. They were afterwards appointed of the number of the twelve Apostles. St. Peter enjoyed the favour of his Divine Master in a peculiar degree. In the introduction to St. John's Gospel have been mentioned three occasions, on which only St. Peter and the two sons of Zebedee were allowed to accompany our Saviour; namely when he restored to life the daughter of Jairus Mark v. 37; when he was transfigured on the mount, Matt. xvii. 1; and when he endured his agony in the garden, Matt. xxvi. 37; St. Peter was one of the four Apostles to whom our Saviour delivered his predictions relative to the destruction of Jerusalem. St. Peter and St. John were sent to prepare the last passover for Christ, Matt. xxvi. 17. The angel at the holy sepulchre commanded that the disciples, and St. Peter in particular, should be informed of Christ's resurrection, Mark xvi. 7: and St. Peter was the first man (Luke xxiv. 34.), as Mary Magdalene was the first woman, to whom Christ appeared after he rose from the dead. Our Saviour said to him, in explanation of the name which he himself had given him, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church: and I will give

unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xvi. 18, 19; and after his resurrection, three several times and with great earnestness he commanded him to feed his sheep, John xxi. 15—17. When Christ put any question to the Apostles at large, St. Peter always gave the answer; and he frequently addressed our Saviour, when the other disciples were silent: as when he rebuked him for speaking of his own sufferings; when he inquired how often a brother might offend and be forgiven; and when he objected to Christ washing his feet. It was St. Peter who proposed that another Apostle should be chosen in the room of Judas Iscariot, Acts i. 15: who preached to the multitude, when they were astonished at the gift of tongues communicated by the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 14: who questioned Ananias and Sapphira concerning the price of their land, and in a miraculous manner punished their falsehood with instant death, Acts v. 1: and who spoke in the name of the Apostles, when they were apprehended and accused by the sanhedrim, Acts v. 29. Through St. Peter and St. John the Samaritan believers received the Holy Ghost, Acts viii. 14; but it was St. Peter alone, who by the immediate command of God himself admitted Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, into the Christian faith, Acts x. 1: and his account of the circumstances attending that important event, convinced the Apostles and other disciples, that "to the Gentiles also God had granted repentance unto life," Acts xi. 18. And thus, as St. Peter had been the first Apostle who preached to the Jews immediately after the descent of the Holy

Ghost, so about eight years afterwards he was also the first who preached to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius at Cesarea. By these means he may be said to have founded the universal church of Christ: and this is supposed to have been the meaning of our Lord's words, "Upon this rock I will build my church, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven;" for by being the first person who explained the gospel both to Jews and Gentiles after the ascension of our Saviour, he as it were opened the doors of heaven to all mankind. He seems to have performed more miracles than any other of the Apostles, for the people brought their sick that his shadow might fall upon them, Acts v. 15. When he was imprisoned by Herod Agrippa, prayer was made for him without ceasing by the church; and he was miraculously delivered out of prison by an angel, though Herod had been permitted to put James the Great to death, Acts xii. 2. The speech of St. Peter at the council of Jerusalem, so often mentioned, is recorded, but of no other person except James the Less, bishop of Jerusalem, Acts xv. 6: and St. Paul tells us, that to St. Peter was committed the gospel of the circumcision, Gal. ii. 7; whence he is called the Apostle of the Jews, as St. Paul is called the Apostle of the Gentiles. And lastly, in all the catalogues of the Apostles, and almost always when he is mentioned in conjunction with others in the Gospels or Acts, the name of St. Peter stands first. Though these facts may lead us to consider St. Peter as the chief, or the most distinguished, of the twelve Apostles, yet

they by no means prove that he had any superior dignity or jurisdiction over the rest: "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren," Matt. xxiii. 8.

No mention is made of St. Peter in the Acts after the council at Jerusalem; nor is any subsequent circumstance recorded of him in the Epistles, except that he was at Antioch not long afterwards, Gal. ii. 11. He is supposed to have preached to the Jews of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Cappadocia, and Asia; and at length coming to Rome, about the year 63 or 64, to have been crucified with his head downwards, himself having desired that it might be in that manner. That St. Peter should die by crucifixion, was foretold by Christ, John xxi. 18; and St. Peter himself alluded to that prediction, 2 Pet. i. 14.

As St. John was the Apostle who was favoured with the greatest share of our Saviour's affection, so St. Peter seems to have been considered by him as the one, whose disposition would lead him to be most active and instrumental in propagating his religion: and that this was really the case, the Acts of the Apostles sufficiently prove. Confidence and zeal form a conspicuous part of his character; but he was sometimes deficient in firmness and resolution. He had the faith to walk upon the water to his Divine Master; but when the sea grew boisterous, his faith deserted him, and he became afraid, Matt. xiv. 28—30. He was forward to acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, Matt. xvi. 16. and declared himself ready to die in that profession, Matt. xxvi. 35; and yet soon after he thrice

denied, and with oaths, that he knew any thing of Jesus, Matt. xxvi. 69, &c. The warmth of his temper led him to cut off the ear of the high priest's servant, John xviii. 10; and by his timidity and dissimulation respecting the Gentile converts at Antioch, he incurred the censure of the eager and resolute St. Paul, Gal. ii. 11. But while we lament this occasional want of steadiness and consistency in St. Peter, we should remember that his good qualities seem not to have been mixed with any other infirmity; and his voluntary acknowledgment to Christ of his being a sinful man, the bitter remorse which he felt upon the denial of his Master, and his submission to the reproof of St. Paul, justify us in concluding that to his zeal he added humility, which are virtues rarely united in the same person.

The general design of this Epistle is, to exhort to practical virtue, to a quiet and blameless life, and to patience and fortitude under distresses and persecutions. St. Peter, after his salutation, begins with returning thanks to God for the blessing of the Gospel dispensation, which, he observes, had been distinctly foretold by the Prophets; he then exhorts his Christian brethren to holiness and purity; and represents the passion of Christ as pre-ordained before the foundation of the world, and its benefits as extending to all eternity, chap. i.; he then proceeds to recommend meekness, self-government, and obedience to magistrates; he enforces the duties of servants, of wives, and husbands; he enjoins harmony, compassion, courtesy, a rational knowledge of the christian faith,

and a steady adherence to it under trials and temptations, chap. ii. iii.; from a consideration of the last judgment he inculcates sobriety, devotion, and universal benevolence; and encourages the Christians to bear afflictions with resignation and cheerfulness, chap. iv.; and in the last chapter he gives directions for the conduct of persons of different ages and situations; recommends mutual subjection, humility, and vigilance.

THE SECOND EPISTLE OF PETER.

This epistle is addressed to the same persons as the former epistle; and the design of it was to encourage them to adhere to the genuine faith and practice of the gospel. It was written when the Apostle foresaw that his death was at no great distance: and he might hope that advice and instruction, given under such circumstances, would have the greater weight. As he is supposed to have suffered martyrdom in the year 65, we may place the date of this epistle in the beginning of that year.

St. Peter, after saluting the Christian converts, and representing the glorious promises of the gospel dispensation, exhorts them to cultivate those virtues and graces which would make their calling and election sure; he expresses his anxiety to remind them of their duty at a time when he was

conscious of his approaching end; and he declares the divine origin of their Christian faith (in the second coming of the Messiah), which was attested by a voice from heaven, and by the sure word of prophecy, chap. i.: he foretells the rise of heresies and false doctrines, and denounces severe judgments against those who shall desert the truth, whilst they who adhere to it will be spared, as Noah and Lot were in former times, chap. ii.: he assures his Christian brethren, that the object of this and of his former epistle was to urge them to observe the precepts which they had received; he cautions them against false teachers, represents the certainty of the day of judgment, reminds them of the doctrines which he and St. Paul had inculcated, and exhorts them to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, chap. iii.

THE FIRST EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

The unanimous suffrage of antiquity attributes this epistle to St. John the Evangelist.

Some have supposed it to have been written before, and others after, the destruction of Jerusalem. As to the place also where it was written, and to the persons to whom it was addressed, there have been great doubts. It was probably written

m Judea, and addressed to Christians in general, of every place and of every description.

Its principal design was to preserve the Christians in the true faith of Christ, in opposition to the erroneous doctrines, which had then begun to make their appearance, and were afterwards maintained by the Gnostics, Docetæ, and Cerinthians. The Apostle begins by assuring the Christian converts that he had seen and heard every thing which he delivered to them concerning Christ: he declares, that if we walk in light, that is, sincerely endeavour to obey the precepts of the gospel, the blood of Christ will cleanse us from all unrighteousness; he condemns those who say that they are guilty of no sin, and recommends confession of sins, chap. i.: he asserts the universality of Christ's propitiation; he states that the knowledge of God consists in the observance of his commandments; he cautions the Christian converts against the love of this world, and against false teachers, chap. ii.: he points out the love of God for mankind, and thence inculcates the duty of mutual love among men, chap. iii.: he urges farther cautions against false teachers, and especially against those who deny that Christ is come in the flesh, that is, who deny the pre-existence and the incarnation of the Son of God; he repeats his admonitions to mutual love, chap. iv., and to the observance of God's commandments; he pronounces that "the whole world lieth in wickedness," and that "God hath given us eternal life through his Son," chap. v.

THE SECOND EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

In the inscription of this epistle St. John, without mentioning his name, calls himself "the elder," which title he probably adopted as being a term of honourable distinction in the primitive church. It is addressed in words, which are capable of several meanings, but which our translators have rendered, "To the elect lady." This is the common acceptation of them, and from it there appears no reason for departing; the epistle therefore may be considered as written to some lady of eminence, styled "elect," on account of her profession of the gospel.

This epistle consists of only thirteen verses: and Dr. Larduer observes, that of these thirteen "eight may be found in the First Epistle, either in sense or expression." The design of it was to caution the lady, to whom it was addressed, against those false teachers who asserted that Christ was not a real man, but only a man in appearance; and that he did not actually suffer what he seemed to suffer. This doctrine the Apostle condemns in very severe terms, as being destructive of the atonement of Christ; and he recommends that no encouragement or countenance should be given to those who maintain it: he inculcates also the necessity of obedience to the commandments of God, and of mutual love and benevolence among Christians.

THE THIRD EPISTLE

OF

JOHN.

THIS epistle is addressed to Gaius, or Caius; but it is not known who this person was. The commendation of his hospitality seems to imply that he was in a private station, and that he was possessed of some substance.

The design of this short epistle was to commend Gaius for having shewn kindness to some Christians, as they passed through the place where he resided; to censure Diotrephes, who had arrogantly assumed some authority to himself; and to praise the good conduct of Demetrius. It is not known who Diotrephes and Demetrius were.

This and the foregoing epistle are supposed to have been written from Ephesus; and it is probable that the persons to whom they were addressed, lived at no great distance from that city, as St. John expresses a hope of seeing them shortly. These two epistles are improperly called "Catholic," as they are written to private persons.

THE GENERAL EPISTLE

OF

JUDE.

JUDAS or Jude, called also Lebbeus and Thaddeus, was the son of Alpheus or Cleophas, the brother of James the Less, the cousin german of our Saviour, and one of the twelve Apostles. His call to be the disciple of Jesus is not recorded: and, except in the catalogue of the Apostles, he is mentioned only once in the Gospels; see John xiv. 22. He is not spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles; nor is any circumstance, on which we can depend, recorded of him in any ancient author. His Epistle is addressed "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called," ver. 1: that is, to all Christians without any distinction. From a passage in verses 17 and 18, it is evident that the epistle was written some time after St. Peter's epistles, and St. Paul's epistles to Timothy, in which the prophecies alluded to in those verses are contained.

St. Jude, after saluting the Christian converts, and praying for divine blessings upon them, exhorts them earnestly to contend for the genuine faith, as delivered originally to the saints, in opposition to the erroneous doctrines taught by false teachers: he reminds the Christians of the severity of God's judgments inflicted on the apostate angels and unrighteous men of former times; from these

examples he warns them against adopting the seducing principles of those who were endeavouring to pervert them from the truth; and denounces woe against all persons of impious and profligate character; he reminds them of the predictions of the Apostles concerning mockers in the last days, and exhorts them to preserve themselves in the true faith and love of God, and to use their best exertions for the preservation and recovery of others. He concludes with an animated doxology, suited to the general design of the epistle.

THE REVELATION

OF

ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

The testimonies in favour of the book of the Revelation being a genuine work of St. John the Evangelist, are very full and satisfactory.

It is called the Revelation of St. John the Divine; and this appellation was first given to St. John by Eusebius, not to distinguish him from any other person of the same name, but as an honourable title, intimating that to him was more fully revealed the system of Divine counsels than to any other Prophet of the Christian dispensation.

The book is also frequently called the Apocalypse, a word which has the same meaning as "the Revelation," being derived from a Greek word signifying "to reveal."

In the Introduction of St. John's Gospel it was shewn, that he was banished to Patmos in the latter part of the reign of Domitian, and that he returned to Ephesus immediately after the death of that emperor, which happened in the year 96: and, as the Apostle states that these visions appeared to him while he was in that island, we may consider this book as written in the year 95 or 96.

In the first chapter, St. John asserts the Divine authority of the predictions which he is about to deliver; addresses himself to the churches of the Proconsular Asia; and describes the first vision, in which he is commanded to write the things then revealed to him. The second and third chapters contain seven epistles to the seven churches in Asia; namely, those of Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, which relate chiefly to their then respective circumstances and situation. At the fourth chapter the prophetic visions begin, and reach to the end of the book. They contain a prediction of all the most remarkable revolutions and events in the Christian church, from the time of the Apostle to the final consummation of all things.

GENESIS.

THE HISTORY OF MANKIND BEFORE THE FLOOD.

Q. WHAT account do the Scriptures give us of the creation of the world?

A. In the beginning the great God, by his powerful word, made the heavens and the earth, and all things that are in them. This work, which might have been instantaneously accomplished, it seemed good to Infinite Wisdom to perform by degrees. Six days were employed in making the universe and its inhabitants. On the first day God made light, and divided it from the darkness. On the second, the air, or the lower heavens, which are here called the firmament, and the clouds, which are the waters above the firmament. On the third, He separated the earth from the sea, and made the trees and herbs to grow out of the ground. The work of the fourth day was, the sun, moon, and stars, which were appointed to give light upon the earth, and to make our days, our months, and our years.

The birds and the fishes, which were both made out of the water, were the work of the fifth day; the sixth and last was employed in the formation of creeping things, beasts, and man, which were all formed out of the earth.

Having completed the work of creation, God blessed his creatures, and pronounced them all very good. The seventh day was blessed and sanctified, or separated, as a Sabbath of rest.

Q. What particulars are given of the creation and original state of man?

A. The first man, Adam, was framed out of the dust of the ground, and a spirit of life imparted to him immediately from his great Creator. Eve, the first woman, was formed from one of the ribs of Adam, taken from him during sleep; she was then given him to be his wife. Both of them were created in the likeness of God, in a holy and happy state, and placed in the garden of Eden to dress and keep it; full liberty being given them to eat any of the herbs, plants, or fruits which grew there, except of one tree, which they were forbidden to eat on pain of death. This tree was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil, because, as soon as man ate of it, he would know evil to his sorrow, as well as he knew good before to his comfort. There was also a tree called *the tree of life*, placed in the midst of the garden, whose fruit was able to have preserved him in life, if he had continued to obey God, and was probably designed as a pledge or seal of eternal life to him, if he had continued in his innocency.

The religion of Adam in this state of innocency consisted in the practice of all the duties toward God, and toward his creatures, which the light of nature or reason could teach him; together with his observance of this one positive precept, of abstaining from the fruit of *the tree of knowledge*; and

this was given him as a special test or trial of his obedience to his Maker.

Q. How did Adam conduct himself in this state of trial?

A. At the suggestion of his wife, who had herself been seduced by the evil spirit concealed under the form of a serpent, Adam was persuaded to eat of the forbidden fruit, and brought sin and death into the world, which have spread through his posterity in all generations. The sentence of death was not immediately executed on Adam and Eve, but they became liable to sickness and death: they were driven out of the garden of Paradise, that they might not taste of *the tree of life*, and they were appointed to labour hard for their food all their days.

A promise of mercy, however, was given them, that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent, in allusion to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who in due time was born of a woman, and destroyed the wicked works and designs of the devil, and rescued mankind from the sin and death which were brought among them by his temptation. A farther act of mercy was shewn by the offended God in furnishing his rebel creatures with skins for clothing, of which they now first stood in need. These skins were most probably taken from beasts offered in sacrifice at the command of God himself, and as typical of the great atonement to be made by Jesus Christ.

In addition to the duties already enjoined by the light of nature, man, as a sinner, was required to exercise the duties of repentance for sin, faith or

trust in the mercy of God, expectation of the promised Saviour, and offering of sacrifices. This is called the *Adamical dispensation* of the covenant of grace, and it reached to Noah's flood.

Q. What account is given of the family of Adam?

A. Cain, his firstborn son, was a tiller of the ground, and Abel a keeper of sheep. Cain's works were evil, and God did not accept his sacrifices; but Abel's works were righteous, and God gave him some token of his acceptance. At this, the hatred and malice of Cain were excited, and he rose up and slew his brother. When reproved by God for this murder, he went out, and departed from the presence of the Lord, and from his father's family, where God was worshipped. Some of his family were famous for inventions of music, and handicraft trades, but they are supposed to have neglected religion.

After the death of Abel, another son, called Seth, was born to Adam. The knowledge and worship of God were preserved for several ages in the family of Seth, who were distinguished as *the sons of God* from the wicked sons of Cain; but in after ages all mankind, with very few exceptions, became so degenerate that God saw fit to manifest his righteous judgment against sin, and drowned the world by a flood of water.

Q. Who were the most remarkable among the posterity of Seth?

A. ENOCH, who walked with God in the midst of a wicked world, who prophesied of the second coming of Christ, and the judgments of God against sinners.

(Jude 14, 15.);—and who, as a distinguished honour, was taken to heaven without dying. METHUSELEH, whose life was the longest we ever read of, namely 969 years;—LAMECH, the father of Noah, who prophesied of the blessing the earth, which had been cursed for the sin of Adam, should find in his son;—and NOAH, who was preserved to be the father of a new world.

OF NOAH, ABRAHAM, AND THEIR FAMILIES AFTER THE FLOOD.

Q. What particulars have we of the history of Noah?

A. He was a righteous man, to whom God intimated his design of destroying the world by water, and directed him to prepare an ark for his own preservation and that of his family.—As 120 years elapsed between this warning and the fulfilment of the threatened judgment, Noah, both by his work and his preaching, was all that time giving warning to a sinful world. When the time had expired, Noah, with his wife and his three sons and their wives, entered the ark; also, some living creatures of every kind, namely two of such as were unclean (or not allowed for sacrifice), and seven of such as were clean.

When God had shut in Noah and his family, He broke up the fountains of the great deep under ground, and caused it to rain forty days and forty nights. At nine months' end Noah sent forth a dove, which brought in an olive branch, to show

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him that the waters were abated; and at the end of twelve months and ten days he came forth, and the creatures which were with him.

After the flood, the offering of sacrifices was continued. Flesh was given to man for food, as herbs were before. Blood was forbidden to be eaten, the blood of man was expressly forbidden to be shed, and murder was to be punished with death. With these few additions, the religion of Noah was the same with that of Adam after the fall, and this is called the *Noaichal dispensation* of the covenant of grace, whereby all men, from Noah to Abraham, were to seek salvation; and whereby all, besides the family of Abraham, were to be saved, even all the heathen world, till they hear of Christ.

On occasion of Noah's first sacrifice after the flood, God was pleased to promise that He would no more drown the world, but that the regular succession of seasons should continue to the end of time, and He appointed the rainbow in token thereof. Whether or not the rainbow had before appeared is uncertain: it has been supposed that there was no rain before the flood, but that the earth continued to be daily watered by a thick mist.

Q. What account have we of Noah's sons?

A. Ham was the progenitor of the Canaanites, Philistines, and others in Asia, and the Egyptians and other inhabitants of Africa. He was guilty of a great crime in making sport of his father whom he saw in a disgraceful situation, and he was cursed under the name of his son Canaan, who probably had joined him in the mocking.

On this occasion, Shem and Japheth concealed the shame of their father, and they were joined in a prophetical blessing. By the posterity of Japheth, Germany, Greece, and other parts of Europe, were peopled; and by that of Shem, Persia, Syria, Palestine, and other parts of Asia. Shem was especially distinguished as the progenitor of the Jewish nation, and of the Great Deliverer of mankind, Jesus Christ.

Q. Did mankind freely divide themselves after the flood into several nations?

A. No; but being all of one language, they agreed rather to build a chief city with a tower, that all men might be joined in one nation or kingdom.

God defeated this design and scattered them abroad by making them speak different languages, and then they ceased to build the tower, which was called *Babel* or *Confusion.*

True religion is supposed to have been chiefly preserved in the family of Shem, but even they, in a great measure, sunk into idolatry.

Q. Who was the most distinguished among the early posterity of Shem.

A. Abraham, the son of Terah, and descendant of Eber. He dwelt first in Chaldea, but left his own country to go whithersoever God directed him. His first remove was to Haran; after which he went to dwell among strangers in the land of Canaan. He was accompanied by Lot, his brother's son, and they brought with them their substance and their households. In course of time their cattle and servants grew so numerous, that they

parted for fear of quarrelling, and Abraham gave Lot his choice to go to the east or the west. Lot chose the east, and pitched his tent towards Sodom, because it was a well-watered and fruitful country; but he was carried away captive, together with other inhabitants of Sodom, when the king of Sodom was routed in battle by his enemies. On this occasion Abraham armed his own servants, three hundred and eighteen men, who pursued the conquerors and routed them, and brought back Lot and the other captives with their goods. When Abraham returned from the slaughter of the kings, Melchisedek, the king of Salem, and the priest of the most high God, met him, and pronounced a blessing upon him. The king of Sodom offered to Abraham all the goods that he had recovered from the former conquerors, but Abraham refused to accept them.

Sodom was afterwards burnt by fire and brimstone from heaven, together with Gomorrah, and other cities, because of the abominable wickedness of their inhabitants. Abraham being informed of the impending judgment, pleaded with God to spare Sodom, and God would have done it, had there been but ten righteous men in all the city.

Lot, however, with part of his family, escaped this destruction; the two angels which were sent to destroy Sodom, having persuaded him to flee away with his family first. Only himself and two of his daughters were preserved; as his sons-in-law refused to remove, and his wife, having accompanied him part of the way, looked back, hankering after Sodom, and was struck dead immediately,

perhaps with a blast of that lightning which burnt Sodom, and she stood like a pillar of salt.

Lot was a righteous man, and his soul was daily vexed with the wicked conversation of the men of Sodom (2 Pet. ii. 7, 8.), but he was once enticed into grievous sin, while residing with his two daughters, in a cave near Zoar. From him descended Moab and Ben-Ammi, the fathers of the Moabites and Ammonites, who proved to be sore enemies of God's people.

Q. What were, meanwhile, the circumstances of Abraham?

A. Having separated from Lot, he went toward the west, and travelling on toward the south-west, he sojourned in the land of Abimelech, king of Gerar, in the country of the Philistines. Sarah, Abraham's wife, being a beautiful woman, Abraham did not call her his wife, but his sister; and Abimelech inadvertently took her into his house; but being warned by God, he restored her again.

At an advanced age Abraham was childless, but God having promised that he should have a son, at the suggestion of Sarah, he took Hagar, an Egyptian bondmaid as his concubine or secondary wife, and by her he had Ishmael; but about fourteen years afterwards, Sarah his wife bare him a son according to the promise of God.

Ishmael having mocked and abused his younger brother, Abraham, by the command of God, turned him and his mother out of the house, and sent them into the wilderness. There the angel of God appeared to Hagar, and showed her a spring of water when they were dying with thirst; and

Ishmael grew up to be a great man, and the father of a large nation.

Q. What are the distinctive epithets given to Abraham?

A. He is called *The father of believers* (Rom. iv. 11; Gal. iii. 7.), and *the Friend of God* (Isaiah xli. 8; James ii. 23.)

The first of these characters was displayed in his believing the promises of God against all probable appearance, and so becoming a pattern to believers in all ages.

The chief promises given by God to Abraham, were three: (1.) That he should have a son when he was a hundred years old. (2.) That his children should possess the land of Canaan, wherein he had not ground enough to set his foot on. And (3.) That all the families of the earth should be blessed in him and his offspring, when he was but a private person. The last promise intended that Jesus Christ, the Saviour of men, should come from his family.

In token of the covenant into which God entered with Abraham, he commanded him and all his sons to be circumcised in all generations. To the religion of Adam, and Noah, Abraham was required to add the observance of this rite, with the expectation of Canaan, to be given to his seed, as a type of heaven; and a trust in the promise of the Saviour who should spring from him, and bless all nations. This Abrahamical covenant, in its literal and temporal sense, was confined to Abraham and and his descendants; but in a spiritual sense, it reaches to every good man, who is hence called a child of faithful Abraham, Rom. iv. 1—17.

Abraham's character as *the Friend of God*, was manifested in intimate communion and eminent obedience.—God visited him, and conversed with him, as a friend, several times, in a visible manner, and changed his name from Abram to Abraham; at the same time the name of his wife was changed from Sarai to Sarah.

Abraham's obedience was displayed in two striking instances:—(1.) His leaving his own country at God's command, not knowing whither he was to go. And (2.) in his readiness to offer up his beloved son Isaac in sacrifice at the command of God. In this trying instance, his willingness was accepted as actual obedience, and God withheld his hand, and sent a ram to be sacrificed instead of Isaac.

Q. What is recorded concerning Isaac?

A. He feared the God of his father Abraham, he had frequent visions of God, he went out into the fields to meditate or pray, and offered sacrifices to God. His father Abraham sent afar, and took a wife for him, even Rebekah, out of his own family in Mesopotamia, because he was unwilling he should marry among the wicked Canaanites, whom God had doomed to destruction. Isaac and Rebekah had two sons, Esau and Jacob

Q. What account have we of the later days of Abraham?

A. His wife Sarah died at the age of 127; when he purchased the cave of Macpelah for a burying place. Afterwards he took another wife, named Keturah, by whom he had six sons, whom he portioned and sent away in his life time,

reserving the inheritance for Isaac. He died at the age of 175 years, and was buried by his sons, Isaac and Ishmael, in the cave of Macpelah; thus, as it were, taking possession of the land of promise.

Q. What were the characters and circumstances of the sons of Isaac?

A. Esau, the eldest, was bred up to hunting rather than husbandry; he despised his birthright, and sold it to his brother for a mess of pottage when he was faint with hunting. Jacob, the younger son, by his mother's contrivance, obtained his father's blessing, though not in a right way. When his father Isaac was old, and his eyes dim, by order of his mother, he put on Esau's clothes, and told his father he was Esau, his eldest son. Enraged at this, Esau threatened to kill him, and therefore he left his father's house, and went to Laban the Syrian, who was his mother's brother. On his way thither, he lay down to sleep on a stone at Bethel, and had a holy dream of God, and of angels there ascending and descending between heaven and earth. When Jacob arrived in Padan-Aran, he kept his uncle Laban's cattle, and he married his two daughters, Rachel and Leah. He lived there twenty years, till he had got a large family of children and servants, much cattle and great riches. On his return to Canaan at the command of God, he had a vision of God as of a man wrestling with him; and on account of his wrestling and prevailing for a blessing, he was henceforth called Israel instead of Jacob.

On account of their former quarrel, Jacob

dreaded to meet Esau, but God turned Esau's heart, so that he met him with great civility, though he came out with four hundred men to destroy him. Esau at this time had a large posterity, who chiefly inhabited mount Seir, and were called Edomites, from Edom, another name given to their father, signifying *red*.

Jacob had twelve sons, and they were called the twelve Patriarchs, because they were the fathers of the twelve tribes of Israel. Their names are Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, the sons of his wife Leah; Joseph and Benjamin, the sons of his wife Rachel; Dan and Naphtali, the sons of Bilhah his concubine; and Gad and Asher, the sons of Zilpah his concubine. Among these the most famous in sacred history are Levi, Judah, and Joseph. The priesthood, and other things relating to the worship of God, were in following times committed to Levi's family, Deut. xvii. 9, and xxxiii. 8, 10. Levi and his brother Simeon dealt very treacherously and cruelly with the Shechemites in slaying them after having made a covenant of peace with them; Jacob their father severely reproved them for this, and on his death-bed, by the spirit of prophecy, pronounced a curse upon them, that they should be scattered abroad through all the land of Israel. This curse was in some measure executed, for the Simeonites as well as Levites had their possessions scattered among all the tribes of Israel; but the curse of the Levites was lightened by their having the priesthood given them.

Judah dealt very basely with his daughter-in-

law Tamar, and committed shameful wickedness. This sin was so far forgiven, that his posterity were not punished for it; for the kingdom and government in future ages was promised chiefly to his family, and from this tribe the Messiah descended.

We have many remarkable particulars concerning Joseph. His brethren envying him because his father loved him, and made him a coat of many colours, and because he dreamed that they should bow down to him, they sold him for a slave into Egypt, where he became the ruler of the land. His first station in the land of Egypt was in the house of Potiphar, a captain of the guard, and by a false accusation of his master's wife he was cast into prison, though he was entirely innocent. There he interpreted the dreams of some of his fellow prisoners, and when the interpretation proved true, he was afterwards sent for to interpret the king's dream. He was then advanced to be ruler of the land of Egypt, because he foretold the seven years of plenty and seven years of famine, which Pharaoh the king dreamed of under two different emblems of good and bad ears of corn, and of seven fat kine and seven lean ones.

During the famine his brethren came down to buy corn in Egypt, and bowed down to him, according to his dreams; but he treated them roughly at first as a great lord and a stranger, till their consciences smote them for their former cruelty to him. He then made himself known to them with much affection and tenderness. He sent for his father, and bade his brethren bring all their families

into Egypt, and he maintained them all during the famine. Jacob died in Egypt, but according to his desire his body was carried up to the land of Canaan, and was buried there, in faith of the promise, that his seed should possess the land. After Joseph's death the families of Israel were made slaves in Egypt, and a new king, who knew not Joseph, sorely oppressed them, and endeavoured to destroy them.

Joseph died in faith of the promise made to his fathers, that they should go and possess the land of Canaan; and therefore he required them, when they went, to carry up his bones, and bury them in the promised land.

EXODUS, &c.*

THE DELIVERANCE OF THE ISRAELITES FROM EGYPT, AND OF MOSES AND AARON.

Q. How were the Israelites delivered from the slavery of Egypt.

A. God heard their cry, and delivered them by the hand of Moses, one of the family of Levi among the people of Israel, who was wonderfully saved from drowning when he was an infant. Pharaoh the king of Egypt had commanded every

* Many particulars of the travels of the children of Israel are interspersed through the book of Numbers; some few in Leviticus, and most of them recorded, more concisely or more fully, in Moses' recapitulation contained in the book of Deuteronomy.

male child to be drowned; and when Moses' parents could hide him no longer, they laid him by the bank of the river, in an ark or box of bulrushes, where the king of Egypt's daughter found him. She took compassion on the child, and brought him up for her own son. When Moses was grown a man, he showed pity to his kindred in their slavery: but having avenged an Israelite, and slain an Egyptian, which being known, he fled from the court of Pharaoh to the land of Midian, where he kept the sheep of Jethro, a priest or prince of the country, and married his daughter. While thus engaged, God appeared to him in a burning bush, and sent him to Pharaoh to require the release of Israel his people. He was afterwards appointed by God the leader and lawgiver of the people.

Aaron was brother to Moses, and was sent by God to meet him, as he was returning to Egypt, and appointed to assist him in dealing with Pharaoh the king. When sent on this errand, Moses and Aaron had power given them from God himself to work several miracles, or signs and wonders, to convince the people of Israel, as well as Pharaoh, that they had a commission from God. First, Aaron cast down his rod, and it became a serpent; and when Pharaoh's conjurors did the same, Aaron's rod swallowed up all theirs; and on Pharaoh's refusal to let the people of Israel go, they brought ten miraculous plagues upon the king, and upon all the land, by the authority and power of God.

Q. What were these ten plagues?

A. Water turned into blood. Frogs. Lice. Flies. Murrain among cattle. Boils and blisters on man and beast. Thunder, lightning, and hail. Locusts. Thick darkness. The first-born slain.

When Pharaoh and the Egyptians at last saw they were all about to be destroyed, (for there was not a house wherein there was not one dead,) they hastened the Israelites out, and lent them jewels and gold to adorn their sacrifices and worship. The number of Israelites that went out of Egypt, was six hundred thousand men, besides children, and all went on foot towards the wilderness of the Red-sea, as they were guided by God Himself, marching before them in a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night. After they were gone, Pharaoh and his army repented that they had let them go, and pursued them to the Red-sea, resolving to destroy them. When the Israelites were in distress, with the Red-sea before them, and Pharaoh's army behind them, they cried unto God, and Moses bade them stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord. Then, at the command of God, Moses struck the sea with his rod, and divided the waters asunder, and the children of Israel went through upon dry land; as for the Egyptians that followed them, God troubled their army, retarded their march, and when Moses stretched out his hand over the sea again, the waters returned upon them, and they were drowned.

The children of Israel went whithersoever God guided them by the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire; they moved and rested according to the rest or the motion of this cloud. Notwith-

standing these wonderful deliverances which people of Israel had experienced, at every difficulty, when they wanted meat or wate met with enemies, they fell to murmuring a God and Moses. In consequence of their verseness and rebellions, they were sentenc wander forty years in the wilderness, during time God fed them with manna, or bread came down every night from heaven, and l round the camp; for their drink Moses smot rock with his rod, and water gushed out in a which attended them in their journeys; and d these forty years their raiment waxed not old did their shoes wear out.

With respect to the government of Israel, M by the advice of his father-in-law Jethro, an God's approbation, appointed officers and ju over the people for common cases, but more difficult were brought to himself. Those and holy laws which Moses gave the peop Israel, by which they were distinguished fro other nations, he received while conversing God fourscore days* and nights in mount S As a token that Moses had been with God face shone so that the people could not con with him, till he put a vail on his face. The

* It is plain, that Moses was twice with God on Sinai, for forty days each time; for Moses c down, and finding the idolatry of the golden calf, the tables of the law which God wrote first; and called him up a second time, and wrote the law o tables. See Exod. xxxiv. 1—5, 28.

given were, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, and all by God's appointment.

The religion of the Jews or Israelites, was the same with that of Adam after his fall, of Noah, and Abraham, with some additions given by Moses. This is called the *Jewish*, or *Mosaical* or *Levitical, dispensation;* and herein God may be considered under three characters. 1. As the universal Creator of all men, and as the Lord God and Ruler of the souls and consciences of all, and of the Jews, as a part of mankind. 2. He may be considered as the God of Israel, or the Jews, as a church outward and visible; whom he had separated from the rest of the nations to be a peculiar people to himself; and so he prescribed to them peculiar forms of worship, and special ceremonies and rites of religion, as tokens of their duty and his grace. 3. He may be considered as the proper King of the Israelites, as a nation; and as they were his subjects, he gave them judicial or political laws, relative to their government, and the common affairs of the civil law. The three branches of this distinction of the Jewish laws in the main are evident enough, though they may be intermingled in some instances.

The moral law comprehends all those commands which relate to their behaviour, considered as men, and which lie scattered throughout the books of Moses; but they are as it were reduced into a small compass in the Ten Commandments, first given them by the voice of God on mount Sinai, three months after their coming out of Egypt, attended with thunder, fire and smoke, and the

sound of a trumpet, and afterwards written by God himself on two tables of stone, and given to Moses. The first table contained their duty towards God in the four first commandments. The second their duty towards man in the six last commandments.

Almost every thing contained in these commands is taught by the light of nature, and obliges all mankind; the honour that is done them in the New Testament also intimates this. But there are several expressions in these laws by which it plainly appears, they were peculiarly appropriated and suited to the Jewish nation in their awful proclamation at mount Sinai. This is evident in the preface, where God engages their attention and obedience, by telling them, that "he was the Lord their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt." This appears also in the fourth command, where the "seventh day," is the appointed sabbath for the Jews; and in Deut. v. 15, God gives this reason for the sabbath, that "He brought them out of Egypt with a mighty hand." It is yet further manifest in the fifth commandment, where the promise of "long life in the land," literally refers to the land of Canaan which God gave that people: "that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Yet, as is before intimated, the citation of these laws by the apostles in the New Testament as rules of our duty, plainly enforces the observations of them so far on the consciences of christians.

The ceremonial law of the Jews comprehends

all those commands which seem to have some religious design in them, especially such as related to their cleansing from any defilement, and their peculiar forms of worship. These forms were in part designed as a recognition of God himself as their king and lawgiver, and they were partly designed also as emblems, types or figures of some spiritual parts of religion.

The forms of purification do most plainly and eminently typify or represent to us how much care the people of God should take to be separated and purified from every sin, and from the communion of sinners; and the Jewish rites of worship represent to us, by way of type or emblem, that spiritual and evangelic worship which should be paid to God, as the Lord of souls and consciences; those blessings of the gospel, which are brought in by Christ and the Holy Spirit, are also represented hereby.

OF THE CEREMONIES OF PURIFICATION.

Among the chief rites or ceremonies appointed for purification or cleansing among the Jews, we may enumerate washing with water, sprinkling with water or blood, anointing with holy oil, shaving the head of man or woman, together with various sorts of sacrifices, and some other appointments. All persons, houses, buildings, garments, or other things which were set apart for the service of God, were to be purified; and all such as had been defiled by leprosy, by touching

human dead bodies, or the carcase of any unclean animal, or by other ceremonial pollutions. As to the manner of purifying, the things which could endure the fire, were to pass through the fire; other things were to be washed with water. And the maidens were to have their heads shaven, and their nails pared, before an Israelite could take any of them for a wife.

There were some things, however, which could not be purified at all by any ceremonies; for example, all the several nations of Canaanites, and the males among other Gentile captives in war, who had refused the offer of peace, were judged so unclean and polluted, that they were all to be destroyed; and the houses and garments of the Israelites, where the leprous spots could not be taken away, were to be destroyed also; and those Israelites in whom the leprosy prevailed, were to be shut out of the camp as unclean.

It is not to be supposed, that any crimes of real immorality or impiety could be taken away by the mere outward performance of any of these ceremonies. They could purify the persons defiled no further than to set them right in their political state, as subjects under God as their king; and to cleanse them, as members of the Jewish visible church, from ceremonial defilement, (Heb. ix. 13:) "The blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth no farther than to the purifying of the flesh." But (Heb. x. 4.) "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should *take away* sins;" that is, as they are committed

against God as the Lord of their soul and consciences.

They obtained pardon of God according to the discoveries of grace and forgiveness scattered through all the five books of Moses, and especially according to the promises made, and the encouragements given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and in general to all those who sincerely repent of sin, and trust in the mercy of God so far as it was then revealed, and to be further revealed in time to come. But this forgiveness is owing to the effectual atonement of Christ, which was to be made in due time, and which took away sins past, as well as to come, Rom. iii. 21, 24—26.

As their outward or ceremonial defilements were appointed to be emblems and figures of the spiritual or moral defilement of the soul by sin, so many of these ceremonies of purification, and particularly those by water and blood, were pledges and tokens to assure them that God would forgive sin; and they were also figures and emblems of the removal of moral defilement or sin from the souls of men by the atoning blood of Christ, and by the sanctifying Spirit of God, which is represented under the figure of "clean water." See Heb. ix. and x.

The trespass offering enjoined in cases of trespass against a neighbour, Lev. vi. 1—7. is said to make atonement before the Lord, and that the sin should be forgiven; that is, it would set the individual right in the sight of God, as king of the nation, against whose political laws this trespass had been committed, but it never was designed to free him from the guilt of his sin in the sight of God as the

Lord of conscience, unless he repented of this sin in his heart, and trusted in the mercy of God so far as it was revealed in that day; for it is a certain truth, that "the blood of beasts cannot take away sins," Heb. x. 4.

Q. Let us now inquire what were the most remarkable things relating to their forms of public worship.

A. There were five, namely, holy persons, holy places, holy things, holy times, and holy actions; that is, devoted to God and his worship, or appointed for his special service. The holy persons among the Jews or Israelites, were the priests and the Nazarites, and all the Levites (though sometimes the whole nation are called holy, Exod. xix. 6.)

Aaron himself, and afterwards the eldest of Aaron's family were appointed to be high-priests in succession; and the rest of his sons and their posterity were the priests, provided they had no blemish in their bodies. They were solemnly separated at first to the priest's office by anointings and purifications, and sacrifices. Their chief business was to offer sacrifices to the Lord, to burn incense before Him in the holy place, to kindle the lamps, to do the higher services of the sanctuary, and to instruct the people. The high-priest was appointed to come nearer to God, even to enter into the most holy place, to do special services on the yearly day of atonement, to oversee all the public worship, and to judge among them in many civil matters as well as religious. And all the priests were to teach *the people* their duty, to assist in judging of civil

and religious matters, and bless the people in the name of the Lord. The priests were appointed to give the sense of the law in civil as well as religious concerns, because the same God who was the object of their worship, was also the king of their nation.

The Nazarites were men or women of any tribe who separated or devoted themselves to the Lord, either permanently or for a time, by a particular vow; a Nazarite was to drink no wine or strong liquor, to approach no dead body, nor to suffer any razor to come upon his head, but let his hair grow all the time: unless he fell under some ceremonial defilement. The fulfilment of his vow was to be signified by shaving his head at the door of the tabernacle, offering a sacrifice, and burning his hair in the fire of it.

The Levites were all the tribe or family of Levi; for they were taken into the service of God, instead of the first-born of all the tribes of Israel, whom God claimed as his own, because He saved them from the destroying angel when he smote all the first-born of Egypt. The business of the Levites was to wait on the priests in their office, and to do the lower services of the sanctuary or holy place. They were separated to the service of the sanctuary, by sprinkling water of purification on them, shaving their flesh, washing their garments, and the people laying their hands on them, as well as by several sacrifices.

The *holy places* were the tabernacle in the days of Moses, and the temple in the days of Solomon, each of which is sometimes called the sanctuary.

The tabernacle was a sort of moveable building made of pillars and boards, set in sockets of silver, and fine linen curtains, embroidered with cherubs, and coupled with loops and tacks of gold, that the whole might be taken to pieces, and carried with them in their journeys. The tabernacle, when it was reared up, stood within a large space of ground which was called the *Court of the Tabernacle*, one hundred cubits long, and fifty cubits broad, and all the tribes pitched their tents round about it. The court of the tabernacle was enclosed by a row of pillars on each side, with curtains reaching from pillar to pillar, and covered with four veils or curtains; one of fine linen, one of goats' hair, the third was made of the skins of rams dyed red, and the fourth or outermost of badgers' skins, to endure the weather. The tabernacle was divided into the holy place, where the priests entered to minister daily, and the most holy place, where none but the high-priest entered, and that but once a year, Heb. ix. 6, 7. The holy place was divided from the most holy, by a curtain or veil of fine linen, of various colours, embroidered with cherubs, and hung on four pillars overlaid with gold. The temple was a most glorious building of stone and timber, raised nearly five hundred years afterwards by King Solomon, instead of this moveable tabernacle, 1 Chron. xvii. 5, 11, 12. 1 Kings vi. 1, 2. Besides these holy places, (namely, the tabernacle and the temple,) Jerusalem was called the holy city, because God appointed the tabernacle in David's time to be removed to mount *Zion*, and because the temple was built by Solomon

on mount Moriah, both which are included within the city of Jerusalem, Neh. xi. 1. 2 Chron. iii. 1. and 1 Kings viii. 1. Matt. vi. 35.

The chief or most considerable of the *holy things* were the ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, the altar of incense, the table, and the candlestick, the altar of burnt-offering, and the laver, the priests' garments, the sacrifices, the purifying water, the holy oil, and holy perfume, together with vessels or instruments relating to all or any of these. The *ark* was a chest or coffer made of wood, and overlaid with gold, wherein the two tables of the law were kept of God's own writing, with some other precious things which were afterward deposited there. The rod of Aaron, which blossomed and brought forth almonds, and the pot of manna, which the Israelites lived upon in the wilderness, were both laid up in or before the ark for a perpetual memorial of those miraculous events, Exod. xvi. 33, 34. Numb. xvii. 10. Heb. ix. 4. The *mercy-seat* was the covering of the ark, and it was made of pure gold, with a cherub of gold at each end of it, with their wings stretched out to cover the mercy-seat, and their faces toward each other, and toward the mercy-seat also. The covering of the ark was called the mercy-seat because God dwelt on it as the God of Israel, between the cherubs in a body of light or a bright cloud, and appeared there as a God of mercy, accepting their sacrifices and their prayers. This light was called by the Jews the Shechinah, or the habitation of God, and sometimes the glory, Rom. ix. 4. The ark and the mercy-seat were placed

in the holy of holies within the veil. The *altar of incense* was made of wood, covered with gold, with a crown or ledge of gold round about it. On this, incense or perfume of sweet spices was burnt and offered every morning and evening. The *table* was made of wood, covered with gold, and had a golden crown, or ledge round it, with golden dishes and spoons. On this table were placed twelve cakes of bread fresh every sabbath, called shew-bread. The *candlestick* was made of pure gold, like a pillar or shaft, with three branches on each side, and thus it would hold one lamp on the top, and six lamps on the branches. Every morning and every evening these lamps were dressed and supplied with pure oil, to burn always before the Lord: the altar of incense, the table of shew-bread, and the candlestick, were kept in the holy place. The *altar of burnt-offering* was made of wood, and overlaid with brass, with shovels and fire-pans, and basins, and other vessels belonging to it. All the burnt offerings and sacrifices were offered upon it. One of its chief glories consisted in this, that the first sacrifice that was offered upon it was burnt by fire from heaven, and that fire was always kept burning there for holy uses. The *laver* was a vast vessel of brass, containing a large quantity of water, for the priests to wash their hands and their feet when they went to do service in the tabernacle. The altar of burnt-offering and the laver stood in the court of the tabernacle, under the open sky.

We next describe the *holy garments*. The common priest had a vest called an ephod, and

some peculiar garments of fine linen appointed them when they ministered in the tabernacle; but the garments of the high-priest were very peculiar, and exceedingly rich and glorious; namely, the *ephod*, which was a sort of short vest without sleeves, to be worn above all the other garments: it was made of fine linen, with blue, purple, and scarlet, interwoven with plates and wires of gold. The *breast-plate* was made of the same work as the ephod; of a span square, with twelve jewels set in gold, ranked in four rows, and fastened to the ephod; on these jewels were engraven the twelve names of the children of Israel, that the high-priest might bear them on his breast, as a memorial before the Lord. The Urim and Thummim on the breast-plate, was something whereby the mind and will of God were made known to the high-priest, when he inquired in cases of difficulty. But we know not what this Urim and Thummim were, or by what signs or tokens, or in what manner, the mind of God was made known on or by this breast-plate to the priests; whether the answer was given by a particular lustre on such letters on the breast-plate as spelled out distinct words, or whether by a voice from the ephod, or from the mercy-seat, is not hitherto agreed by the learned, and their conjectures about it are very various and uncertain. The *girdle of the ephod* was of curiously embroidered work, used to bind the ephod with other garments close to the body, and some suppose it to have been fastened to the ephod. The *robe of the ephod* was an upper garment woven all of blue, with wrought pome-

granates, and golden bells hanging on them, to make a sound when the high-priest went into the holy place. The *coat* was an under garment, closer to the body, made of linen, and finely embroidered. The *mitre* was a cap of fine linen, with a plate of pure gold fastened on the fore part of it, with a lace of blue. On this plate was engraven HOLINESS TO THE LORD, because Aaron was to bear the iniquity of their holy things, that they might be accepted before the Lord.

Q. Thus much for the holy garments: now let us notice the sacrifices appointed, which are also numbered among the holy things?

A. All sacrifices were offerings made to God: some were of corn, or wine, or oil; and others were offerings of living creatures, birds or beasts, which were generally to be slain: but all sacrifices must be perfect in their kind, and without a blemish. These sacrifices were to be offered in no other place but at the door of the tabernacle, or the temple. We indeed read of Gideon and Samuel, and David and Elijah, building altars, and offering sacrifices in other places; but this was not lawful to be done but by prophets and inspired men, or at God's express command. In some sacrifices the whole was burnt on the altar; in others a part was burnt, and other parts were given to the priests for their subsistence: and in some sacrifices the persons who offered them were allowed to partake also. The blood was never to be eaten, but to be poured out or sprinkled, according to God's appointment; for the blood is the soul or life of the beast, and it is blood that maketh atone-

ment for the soul or life of man. Sacrifices of corn, wine, and oil, were called meat-offerings and drink-offerings; they were appointed chiefly to give thanks to God for mercies received. As to the sacrifices of living creatures, some might be designed, perhaps, by way of thanksgiving, but most of them were to make atonement for sins or trespasses against the law of the Jews, or to purify the unclean from some ceremonial defilement. "It is not possible (as St. Paul assures us) that the blood of bulls and goats should really take away sins" committed against God, as the Lord of conscience; but when a man among the Jews had offended God, considered as king of the nation, by some civil trespass against the laws of the land, God was pleased to accept of the suffering or death of the beast, instead of the death or suffering of the man; or if a person fell into some ceremonial defilement, he was to be purified by the blood of the beast; and this was an emblem, or type and token, that the sin of man deserved death, and that God, considered as the Lord of conscience, would forgive sin, and would accept of the sufferings and death of his Son in due time, as a real sacrifice of atonement, in the room of the sinner. See Heb. ix. and x. 1 Pet. i. 19. and ii. 24.

The sacrifices were burnt with fire which came down at first from heaven on the altar, and it was kept always burning on the altar for sacred uses, that is, to light the lamps, to burn incense, and to kindle other fires in their worship.

Q. Who were those persons that dared to use other fire in worship than what God appointed?

A. Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, burnt incense with strange fire; and there went out a fire from the Lord and devoured them.

These various sacrifices were to be offered daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly, and on many special occasions, as God revealed to Moses. The daily sacrifice was a young lamb every morning and every evening for a burnt-offering, together with a meat-offering and drink-offering. The design of it was to keep the people in remembrance that for their daily sins they needed continual atonement and pardon, and that God required continual thanksgiving for his daily mercies. One special sacrifice was offered to make the purifying water, called the water of separation. On this occasion a red heifer was to be slain and burnt without the camp, with her skin, flesh, and blood, with cedar-wood, hyssop, and scarlet; and all the ashes were to be gathered and laid up in a clean place without the camp. The water of separation was to be made by putting some of the ashes of the burnt heifer in a vessel, and mingling with running water. The use of it was to purify persons, or things, or places, which were defiled by touching a human dead body, or the bones of a man, or a grave. It was to be thus applied: some clean person must take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon the persons and vessels that were unclean, Ps. li. 7. Heb. ix. 13, 14. The holy anointing oil was a kind of liquid ointment, compounded of myrrh, cinnamon, and other rich spices, with oil-olive, by the art of the apothecary: and there was none to be made like it on pain of death. All

the vessels of the tabernacle were to be anointed with it, as well as Aaron the high-priest, and his sons. The incense or holy perfume was a composition of sweet spices with frankincense; nor was any to be made like it on pain of death. Some of it was to be beat to powder, and laid before the ark in the most holy place before the Lord; and it was this incense of sweet spices which was burnt daily on the altar of incense.

The last sort of holy things relating to the Jewish worship is, the instruments and vessels which were used in their sacrifices, and in any other part of their religion; such as the golden censer belonging to the most holy place; the vessels belonging to the table of shew-bread, namely, the bowls and dishes, and spoons, and covers; the vessels belonging to the candlestick and lamps, namely, the snuffers and snuff-dishes, all made of gold. The following were made of silver: the hooks and fillets of the pillars of the court, and the sockets of some of the pillars, and of all the boards of the tabernacle. There were also chargers and bowls of silver, offered by the princes for the use of the sanctuary, and trumpets of silver. The instruments of brass were those which belonged to the altar of burnt-offering; namely, the pots, shovels, basins, flesh-hooks, and fire-pans, besides the brazen gate of net-work; also the common censers for incense were supposed to be vessels of brass fit to hold fire. The instruments of wood were the staves fixed to the golden rings to bear the ark: the incense altar, and the golden table, were all made of Shittim wood, and overlaid

with gold; but the staves to bear the altar of burnt-offering were overlaid with brass.

The chief of the *holy times* or days appointed to the Jews were the weekly sabbaths, the new moons, the feast of the passover, the feast of pentecost, the feast of trumpets, the great day of atonement, and the feast of tabernacles. The seventh day of every week was a day of holy rest from all the common labours of life, and a day of assembling, or worship, which is called an holy convocation. On this day the daily sacrifice was doubled, and it is very probable that some portions of the law were to be read, and perhaps expounded, chiefly by the priests and Levites, as was practised afterwards in the synagogues, Acts xv. 21. This day was sanctified or made holy, partly from God's resting from the work of creation on the seventh day, and partly in remembrance of the Israelites' deliverance and rest from their slavish labours in Egypt, Exod. xx. 11. Deut. v. 15. The feast of the new moons was the beginning of their months, which they reckoned by new moons, when they were to blow the silver trumpets, and offer a special sacrifice.

The Feast of the Passover was kept for seven days in their first month, Abib,* by sacrificing a

* The first month of the Jews, for all the common affairs of life, which are called civil affairs, was Tisri, which in part answers to our September, and is the first month after the autumnal equinox; and it was always so to continue for civil affairs, as appears from Exod. xxiii. 16. chap. xxxiv. 22. and Lev. xxv. 8—10. But as to ecclesiastical or religious matters, the first month

lamb, and eating it in every family, in remembrance of God's passing over the families of Israel, when He slew the first-born in every house of the Egyptians. On the fourteenth day of the month, they were to roast a lamb for supper, and to eat unleavened bread that evening, and seven days after. During these seven days, there were special sacrifices every day; a sheaf of the first ripe corn, that is, barley, was now offered to God; and on the first and last day there was a holy convocation or assembly for worship, at the feast of pentecost. Fifty days, or seven weeks, after the first ripe corn (or barley) had been offered to God, there was a particular sacrifice, and a holy assembly, and two loaves of the first fruits of wheat were to be offered. This feast was kept as a thanksgiving for the beginning of wheat harvest, and perhaps also in memory of the giving of the law at mount Sinai; which was seven weeks, or fifty days, after the passover, and their coming out of Egypt.

The Feast of Trumpets took place on the first day of the seventh month, when blowing of trumpets was appointed with peculiar sacrifices, and an holy assembly. There is no special design of this feast expressly mentioned, but it is generally supposed, 1. This seventh month having several holy days in it, was a sort of sabbatical month, or month of sabbaths, and was to be begun with an extra-

after the vernal equinox, called Abib, which answers partly to our March, was designed to be the beginning of the year to the Jews, in memory of their great deliverance from Egypt.

ordinary sound of trumpets. 2. This was cou
the first month, and first day of the year for
matters, as the others were for things relig
and was to be proclaimed by sound of trumpe

The great Day of Atonement was the
day of the seventh month, which was appo
as a general day of public fasting and humilia
repentance, and atonement for all the pe
This was the day when the high-priest, dr
in his richest garments, was to enter into the
holy place with the blood of a peculiar sacr
and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat before
Lord, to make atonement for the sins of
whole nation, and to offer incense on the g
censer.

In the year of Jubilee, on this great da
atonement, the trumpet of jubilee was to
sounded through the land, to proclaim liber
all the inhabitants.

On the fifteenth day of the seventh mont
the end of all their harvest, they began the Fe
Tabernacles, and dwelt seven days in booths ma
the boughs of trees, to keep in memory
dwelling in booths in the wilderness, when
went out of the land of Egypt. This feast
observed by peculiar sacrifices every day, a
holy assembly on the first day, and on the e
day. The Jews counted their days, and par
larly their holy days, from the evening of su
to the next evening. The feasts were to be
at the place which God should choose for
residence of the ark and tabernacle; which
first at Shiloh, afterwards at Jerusalem; th

the blowing of trumpets to proclaim the beginning of the year was practised in all the cities of Israel. At the three chief feasts, namely, the Passover, Pentecost, and the Feast of Tabernacles, all the males were to appear before God in one place with some offering, such as the tithe or tenth part of their corn, wine, and oil, and the first-born of their cattle: but they themselves were to partake in eating of it, though the bulk of it was to be given to the priests and Levites. To meet the danger which might have been supposed to attend the Israelites leaving their dwellings, especially in towns and villages, which bordered on their enemy's country, God promised them, that when they should go up to appear before Him thrice in the year, no man should desire their land, which was a standing miracle during that dispensation.

All those actions may be called holy which were appointed to be a part of this ceremonial worship; but the actions relating to the natural worship of God, such as prayer and praise, are in themselves holy and religious.

The chief uses of all ceremonial commands appear to have been these. (1.) To distinguish the Jews from all other people as a holy people, and God's peculiar visible church, who eminently bore up his name and honour in the world. (2.) To employ that people, who were so much given to idolatry, in many varieties of outward forms and rites of religion, lest they should be tempted to follow the superstition and idolatry of the nations round about them. (3.) To represent by types, figures, and

emblems, many of the offices of Christ, and the glories and blessings of his Gospel.

This last appears from many places in the New Testament, where Jesus Christ and the blessings of the Gospel are called by the same names. So Christ is called our "High Priest," Heb. iii. 1. and iv. 14. He is "the Lamb that was slain," Rev. v. 6. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20. "Our Passover," 1 Cor. v. 7, "and Sacrifice to take away sin," Heb. ix. 26. "The Atonement or Propitiation for sin," Rom. iii. 25. 1 John ii. 2. His body is called the Temple, because God dwelt in it as in the Jewish temple, John ii. 19, 21. Col. ii. 9.

This appears yet farther from the evident and intended resemblance which the Scripture represents between several of the Jewish ceremonies and the things of the Gospel. The blood of Christ obtained eternal redemption for us, as the blood of bulls and goats cleansed and freed the Jews from ceremonial defilements, Heb. ix. 12, &c. His blood is called the blood of sprinkling, Heb. xii. 24, to sprinkle or cleanse us from a guilty conscience, as the sprinkling of the blood of the Jewish sacrifices purified the people, Heb. ix. 19. and x. 22. The most holy place, where God dwelt of old on the mercy-seat, is the figure of the true heaven, where God dwells on a throne of grace, Heb. ix. 8, 24. and iv. 16. The high priest's entrance with the blood of the sacrifice, and with the names of the tribes on his breast, into the most holy place, to appear before God there for the Jews, is a plain figure of Christ's entrance into heaven with his own blood, to appear before

God for us, Heb. ix. 12, 25. The Jewish incense was a type or figure of prayer, Rev. v. 8. and viii. 3. The Jewish sabbath, or day of rest, as well as the land of Canaan, was a type of the rest and release of believers from sin and guilt, and from an uneasy conscience under the Gospel, and the final rest of the saints in heaven, Heb. iv. 3, 4, 9, 10.

This might be proved more at large by some other Scriptures, where the Jewish rites in general are called "figures or shadows of the good things of the Gospel," Col. ii. 16, 17. Heb. viii. 5. and ix. 1—14, 23, 24. How far the Jews themselves understood the spiritual meaning of these ceremonies does not appear. Perhaps a few of them, who were more enlightened, might understand the meaning of some of the chief and most considerable types; but the bulk of the people can hardly be supposed to have understood their full meaning. The Jewish dispensation was the childish or infant state of the church of God, as it is described, Gal. iv. 1—3, &c. Now, children are sometimes employed in several things by their wiser parents, the chief design and meaning whereof they understand not till riper years. Besides, if these ceremonies were not understood by the ancient Jews, to whom they were given, yet they might be designed as types and figures of Christ, and the blessings of the Gospel, in order to confirm the religion of Christ and the Gospel, when it should be afterwards published to the world, by seeing how happily it answers these ancient types; and indeed, St. Paul does actually

confirm Christianity this way, especially in his Epistle to the Hebrews, by showing how these ancient types and ceremonies are fulfilled in the Gospel of Christ.

We do not indeed as yet fully understand the meaning of all these ceremonies or types as fulfilled in Christ. The New Testament has revealed to us, and taught us to understand, the chief and most considerable both of the types and prophecies; and we make no doubt but that both are, or shall be, accomplished in Christ. Probably it is reserved as one part of the glory of that happy day, when the Jews shall be converted, that the rest of their prophecies, as well as the rites and ceremonies of their ancient worship, together with their accomplishment in Christ and the Gospel, shall be more completely understood.

OF THE POLITICAL OR JUDICIAL LAW OF THE JEWS.

We proceed now to the judicial or political law, or that which related to their civil government as a nation.

God himself condescended to take upon him the title of their king, and he appointed various kinds of governors under him, as he thought fit, Judges viii. 23; 1 Sam. xii. 12, 13; Isa. xxxiii. 22: and since the same person was both their God and their king, the tabernacle and the temple may be considered not only as the residence of their God, but as the palace of their king also.

The political or civil laws obliged the people to *many particular* practices, relating, (1.) To war

and peace. (2.) To husbands and wives. (3.) Parents and children. (4.) Masters and servants. (5.) Food and raiment. (6.) Houses and lands. (7.) Corn and husbandry. (8.) Money and cattle. (9.) The birds and beasts. (10.) The first-born of all things. (11.) The maintenance of the Levites and priests. (12.) The care of the bodies and lives of men.

The following are some of the more particular laws on these subjects:—That they should make no peace with the seven nations of Canaan, but should destroy them utterly;—and that when they went to war, every soldier who was afraid might go home. That a man should marry his brother's widow, if his brother died childless;—that men were permitted to put away their wives by a writing of divorce;—and that adultery was to be punished with death. The first-born son was to have a double portion: and any child who smote or cursed his father or his mother, or was obstinately rebellious or incorrigible, was to be put to death. Any servant might go free, if his master had maimed him;—and an Israelitish servant, though he were bought with money, should go out free for nothing in the seventh year; and if he would not go out free, his master should bore his ear through on the door-post with an awl, and he should serve him for ever.* They must eat no blood, nor the fat of the kidneys, nor any thing that died of itself, or was torn by

* This term, *for ever*, signifies till the year of jubilee; for all servants or slaves who were Hebrews were then to have their freedom, and to return to their own lands and possessions, in their own tribe.

wild beasts, nor any of the beasts, or birds, or fishes, which were pronounced to be unclean; and therefore they would not eat with heathens, lest they should taste unclean food. A man must not wear the raiment of women, nor a woman the raiment of men: they must wear no mixed garment made of woollen and linen; and they were required to make fringes in the borders of their garments, and put upon the fringe of the borders a ribbon of blue, that they might look upon it, and remember to do the commandments of the Lord. It was required every seventh year that the land should rest from ploughing and sowing; and God promised to give them food enough, in the sixth, for three years. And every fiftieth year, which is the year of jubilee, all houses and lands that were sold should return to their former possessors, except houses in walled towns. They were forbidden to plough with an ox and an ass together; to sow their fields with seeds of different kinds; or to make clean riddance of their harvests, either of the fields or of the trees, for the gleanings were to be left for the poor. And any travellers might eat their fill of grapes or corn in a field or vineyard, but might carry none away. They might lend money upon usury to a stranger, but not to an Israelite. A thief should restore double for whatsoever thing he had stolen; but if he stole cattle, and killed or sold them, he must pay five oxen for an ox, and four sheep for a sheep. But if he had nothing to pay the thief should be sold for his theft. They were forbidden to muzzle the mouth of the ox that trod out the corn, that so he might eat some while he was treading it: nor

when they took a bird's nest in the fields, with eggs or young ones, were they permitted to take the dam with them. The first-born of man and beasts were devoted or given to God, as well as the first-fruits of the trees and of the field. The first-born of men were redeemed by the Levites; the first-born of beasts were to be sacrificed, or some way put to death, if not redeemed. The priests were to be maintained by the first-born of all cattle, and the first-fruits of oil, and wine, and corn, and they had a share in various sacrifices, namely, the heave-offerings,* the wave-breast, and the right shoulder. The Levites were maintained by the tenth or tithe of fruits and corn, which God appointed for them: and they had some cities, and their suburbs, given them out of every tribe.

Their special laws about the bodies and the lives of men, were such as these:—He that killed, or stole and sold, a man, must die for it; and in all cases of real injury or mischief, life was to pay for life, an eye for an eye, a hand for a hand, or a foot for a foot. And this was the penalty of a false witness, who intended to bring any mischief whatsoever on another; for the same was to be executed on the false witness. For him that killed another, if he did it wilfully, there was no pardon: but if it was done by chance, there were six cities of refuge,

* Heave-offerings were to be moved upwards and downwards, towards heaven and earth. Wave-offerings were to be shaken to and fro, or moved towards the four quarters of the heaven. All this is supposed to signify an offering of them to God, as universal Lord of all parts of the creation, and who dwells every where.

in the land of Canaan, appointed, to which manslayer might fly and be safe. But he was bound to dwell there till the death of the high priest. In some cases of maiming or killing a slave, the offender was not punished to the same degree as if the injured person had been a free man.

The usual punishments of criminals appointed in the Jewish law were these:—A fine of money or cattle to be paid, a cutting off from the people or congregation, scourging or beating, at most with forty stripes,* the loss of a limb, or the loss of life. The meaning of being "cut off from the people," or the "congregation," in some greater crime, such as presumptuous rebellion against the laws of God, wilful sabbath-breaking, &c. may signify capital punishment or death by the hands of the magistrate, Numb. xv. 30, 31; Exod. xxxi. 14. In some cases it may intend a being devoted to some judgment by the immediate hand of God, Lev. xvii. 10, and xx. 5, 6. But in some lesser crimes, perhaps, it may signify no more than to be excommunicated, or shut out of the congregation of Israel, and the privileges thereof; as, for eating leavened bread at the time of the passover, Exod. xii. 15;

* The Jewish rulers in after ages, pretended to be very scrupulously exact in observing the law—hence they never inflicted more than thirty-nine stripes, lest they should happen to mistake in the tale, and transgress the law in exceeding forty. St. Paul, against whom the bitterest enmity was felt, and who was chastised with the utmost severity of the law, "five times received forty stripes, *save one*." 2 Cor. xi. 24.

or for a man's going unto the holy things with his uncleanness upon him, Lev. xxii. 3, where it is expressed, that "that soul shall be *cut off* from the presence of God."

Their most common ways of putting criminals to death were by hanging them on a tree, or by stoning them with stones. In cases of crimes meriting the punishment of death, the testimony of two or three witnesses was necessary. The design of God in giving the Jews many peculiar laws about their civil or political affairs, were such as these:—To let them know that God was their king as well as their God, and to keep them distinct and separate from the rest of the nations, as his own people and kingdom. Many of these laws were in themselves excellently suited to the advantage of that people, dwelling in that country, and under those circumstances. Some of these laws had a moral or spiritual meaning in them, which might partly be known at that time, and which was further discovered afterwards; for example, "Thou shalt not take the dam with the young," Deut. xxii. 6, 7, is to teach men mildness and compassion. "Thou shall not muzzle the ox that treads out the corn," Deut. xxv. 4, is to show that ministers, who provide us spiritual food, ought to be maintained themselves, 1 Cor. ix. 9, 10, for so the apostle Paul hath explained it.

OF THE SINS AND PUNISHMENTS OF THE JEWS IN THE WILDERNESS.

Q. After all this account of the moral, ceremonial,

and judicial laws, can you tell me whether the people of Israel obeyed them or no?

A. No; they often broke the laws of God, and sinned against him, and were often punished. Besides their murmurings at some difficulties in the beginning of their journey, the first remarkable and notorious crime was their making a golden calf, and worshipping it at the foot of mount Sinai. Moses was at this time gone up into mount Sinai, and tarried there so many days longer than they expected, that they wanted some visible token of God's presence among them; and so they constrained Aaron to make this golden image; to be a representation of the presence of God, but without God's appointment. As a punishment for this sin, the children of Levi were commanded to slay their brethren, and they slew three thousand of the children of Israel. In the next stage, after Sinai, they loathed the manna, which God sent them, and murmured for want of flesh; when God gave them the flesh of quails in abundance, and sent the plague with it. Their third remarkable sin was being discouraged by the spies, who searched out the land of Canaan, and brought an ill report of that promised land, when they were for making a captain to return to Egypt. In chastisement of this rebellion, ten of the spies died immediately of a plague, and all the people were condemned to wander forty years in the wilderness, till all those who were above twenty years old should die by degrees in their travels. Two of the spies were saved, Caleb and Joshua, who followed the Lord fully, and gave a good account of the land of

promise. Their fourth remarkable sin was a rebellion against Moses and Aaron, stirred up by Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, under a pretence that all Israel were holy, and that Aaron and his family had no more right to the priesthood than they; and that Moses took too much upon him to determine every thing among them. The ringleaders and their families were swallowed up by an earthquake,* and their two hundred and fifty companions were burnt by a fire which came out from God; and when the congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron for the death of these sinners, God smote above fourteen thousand of them, and they died of the plague. On this occasion a miracle was wrought to show that God had chosen Aaron's family to the priesthood. Moses directed the heads of the people to choose twelve rods for the twelve tribes of Israel, and write Aaron's name upon Levi's rod, and lay them up in the tabernacle till the morrow: at which time they took each man his rod, and Aaron's rod blossomed and yielded almonds. This rod was laid up in the ark to be a lasting testimony against these rebels, and to confirm Aaron's right to the priesthood.

The people next murmured because of the length of the way, and for want of better food than manna. On account of this new murmuring, God sent fiery serpents among them, which destroyed many of them; but the people, which were bitten by the serpents, were healed by looking up to a serpent of brass,

* Yet in Numb. xxvi. 11. the sons of Korah are excepted.

which Moses put upon a high pole at God's command.

The sixth remarkable sin of Israel was whoredom and idolatry; for they loved the Midianitish women, and worshipped their gods. This crime was punished by the command of God and Moses to kill the offenders, and by a plague which slew twenty-four thousand of them. They were tempted to this idolatry by Balaam, the wicked prophet and soothsayer, whom God hindered from cursing Israel, when Balak the king of Moab had hired him to do it. The Lord hindered Balaam's wicked purpose in three ways. (1.) By forbidding him to go at first, though afterwards he permitted him. (2.) By making his own ass speak to him, to stop him when he was going. (3.) By inspiring him with prophecies, and compelling him to bless Israel three or four times, instead of cursing them. Balaam at last was slain among the Midianites by the men of Israel under the conduct of Moses, before they came to the river of Jordan.

JOSHUA.

OF THE ISRAELITES' POSSESSION OF CANAAN.

Though the sins and punishments of the people of Israel were many and great, yet they were not destroyed; but God brought them at last into Canaan, the land which he promised to their fathers. Neither Moses nor Aaron were permitted *to enter Canaan*, because they had both sinned and

offended God in the wilderness, and God would show his displeasure against sin. Perhaps also God might teach us hereby, that neither the law of Moses nor the priesthood of Aaron were sufficient to bring us into the possession of the heavenly country, of which Canaan was a figure. Aaron died first, at mount Hor, and Eleazar his son was made high-priest in his stead. Shortly afterwards Moses was permitted to see the promised land from mount Pisgah, and there he died, and God buried him.

Joshua, whose name is the same with Jesus, became the governor and captain of Israel after Moses died, and led them into the promised land. When they reached Jordan, the boundary of Canaan, as soon as the priests who bore the ark dipped their feet in the brink of the river, the waters which were above rose up in a heap, and the channel was left dry while all the people passed over. By God's appointment, they took up twelve stones out of the midst of Jordan, where the priests stood with the ark while the tribes passed over, and set them up as a monument in the place wherein they lodged the first night, for a memorial of their having passed over Jordan on foot. When they took the land of Canaan, they were required to destroy utterly the inhabitants, lest, if they should live, they might teach Israel their idolatries, and their wicked customs. As to the right of the Jews thus to destroy them, and take their country; the Canaanites were abominable sinners, and God, by particular inspiration, made the Jews the executioners *of his wrath* against them, just as He might have

used a plague, or the beasts of the earth, to have destroyed them: and then, as the sovereign Lord of all, He gave their forfeited country and possessions to whom He pleased. This is not liable to be made a precedent, or a pretence for any other nation or person to treat their neighbours in a similar way, be they ever so wicked, unless they can show such astonishing and undoubted attestations of a plain commission from God, the righteous Governor of the world, and the sovereign Lord of all.

The first city they took in Canaan was Jericho, whose walls fell down when by God's appointment they sounded trumpets made of rams' horns. By God's command this city was devoted as the first-fruits, to be a sacrifice to the Lord, and therefore they burnt all the goods in it, together with the city, as well as destroyed all the inhabitants, except Rahab the harlot, and her kindred, who were spared because Rahab believed that God would give Israel the land of Canaan, and she hid and saved the spies whom Joshua sent.

In their next enterprise, God suffered Israel to be put to flight before the men of Ai, because Achan an Israelite had stolen and hid some of the spoil of the city of Jericho, which was accursed, and devoted to the fire. Under this rebuke they mourned humbly before God, they sought out the person who had stolen this accursed thing, and stoned him and his family to death. At last they took the city by counterfeiting a flight, as on the former day; and when the men of Ai were drawn *out of the city,* the Israelites, who lay in ambush,

entered and burnt it. The Gibeonites deceived the people of Israel, and saved themselves from death by sending ambassadors, with old sacks upon their asses, and old garments and mouldy bread, to prove that they came from a far country; and the men of Israel rashly made peace with them, and swore to it. When Joshua found that they dwelt in the midst of Canaan, he let them live, because the elders had sworn to them; but he made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation, and for the altar of the Lord.

When they encountered the king of Jerusalem, with his four allies, God helped Israel, by casting great hailstones from heaven upon their enemies. On that day Joshua bade the sun and moon to stand still to lengthen out the day for his victory, and they obeyed him. When Joshua took the five kings, he called the captains of Israel to set their feet on their necks, and then he slew them, and hanged them upon five trees before the Lord. The Israelites, under the conduct of Joshua, went on till they had slain one-and-thirty kings, and then the people rested from war for a season.

When they came to Canaan, the tabernacle was first, by the appointment of God, set up in Shiloh, in the tribe of Ephraim, at some distance from Jerusalem, and there it tarried above three hundred years, even to the days of Samuel.

As to the division of the land, Reuben and Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, had their inheritance given them by Moses on the other side Jordan; and Joshua cast lots for the rest of the tribes before the *Lord in Shiloh*. The tribes of Reuben and Gad, and

half Manasseh, by the appointment of Moses, went over Jordan to assist their brethren, till they were settled in the land. As a memorial that these two tribes and a half belonged to the nation of Israel, they built a great altar upon the borders of Jordan, not for sacrifice, but merely as a memorial of their interest in the God of Israel, in the tabernacle, and in the worship thereof. The tribe of Levi being devoted to the service of the tabernacle and religion, were not fixed in one spot of ground, but had a share in the inheritance of every tribe, that they might teach the people in every city the laws of God and their duty. Just before the death of Joshua, he summoned the people together, and made a most solemn covenant with them, that they should serve the Lord. After the death of Joshua, by the appointment of God, the tribe of Judah went up against Bezek, and when they took Adonibezek (or the king of Bezek), they cut off his thumbs and great toes, in which punishment he confessed the justice of God, for he had cut off the thumbs and great toes of threescore and ten kings, and made them gather meat under his table. The Israelites did not drive all the Canaanites out of the land, for there were some left for several hundred years after Joshua's death: the Jebusites and the Philistines continued till the days of David. These Canaanites were left to prove Israel, whether they would obey the Lord, and to be as thorns in their sides, to punish them for their sins. When Joshua was dead, and the elders of the people of *that age* that outlived him, the children of Israel *fell to idolatry*, or worshipping the gods of the na-

tions round about them; and this was the great sin of which they were most commonly guilty after their settlement in Canaan.

JUDGES.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL BY JUDGES.

God was always the king and ruler of Israel, and under Him the several tribes probably chose their own magistrates and officers, according to the appointment of Moses. The high-priest seems to be appointed by God and Moses, as the chief counsellor in declaring the laws and statutes of God; as the other priests were also counsellors; but the executive power of government was rather vested in those who were called judges, whether they were ordinary or extraordinary. After the days of Joshua, we have very little account of the ordinary officers; but it is certain they did not fulfil their duty, because there was sometimes great wickedness among the people, without restraint; much idolatry and mischief, both public and private, and that for want of government. It appears that as the Israelites had forsaken God and his laws, so He sometimes gave them up for a season to the confusions and miseries which arise from the want of government, and also suffered their enemies, on every side, to make inroads upon them, and bring them into slavery. But God in mercy sometimes interposed for their deliverance, by raising up in the course of his providence, and by special *inspiration*, extraordinary judges to rescue

them from the hand of their enemies, and to restore government among them.

The most remarkable of these extraordinary judges were Ehud and Shamgar, Deborah, and Gideon, Jephthah, Samson, and Samuel. Ehud was a man of Benjamin, who delivered Israel from the oppression of Eglon, king of Moab, by bringing a present to Eglon, and then stabbing him with a dagger. Shamgar rescued Israel from the oppression of the Philistines, and slew six hundred of them with an ox's goad. Deborah was a prophetess, who delivered Israel from the tyranny of Jabin, king of Canaan, who had nine hundred chariots of iron. She sent forth Barak to battle against him, who routed his army, which was commanded by Sisera his general: and Sisera was slain by the hand of Jael, a woman, who when he came to rest himself in her tent, drove a nail into his temples. Gideon was the son of Joash; he was called by an angel, or by God himself, to destroy the worship of Baal, and to deliver Israel from the hands of the Midianites. In obedience to this command, Gideon first threw down the altar of Baal, the idol, by night, and cut down the idolatrous grove, and then offered a sacrifice to the Lord, according to the order he had received from God. As a token of success, at his request God made a fleece of wool wet, when the ground all around it was dry; and again he made a fleece of wool dry, when the ground was wet. Out of thirty-two thousand men, God appointed but three hundred for Gideon's army. Each of these, by *Gideon's order*, took a trumpet, and a pitcher

with a lamp in it, and coming at midnight on the camp of the Midianites, they broke their pitchers, and frighted them with a sudden blaze of lamps, the sound of the trumpets, and loud shouting. After this great victory, the people would have made Gideon their king, but he refused to reign, for he said God was their king.

After Gideon's death, Abimelech, the son of his concubine, made himself king, and slew all his threescore and ten brothers, except the youngest, who escaped. At last, when Abimelech was besieging a city, a woman cast a millstone upon his head.

Jephthah was a mighty man of valour, who delivered Israel from the power of the Ammonites. He made a rash vow to sacrifice to God the first thing that came to meet him after his victory, and that happened to be his daughter and only child.

Samson was the son of Manoah, and he delivered Israel from the hands of the Philistines. He was the strongest of men, but he does not seem to have been the wisest or the best. As a Nazarite, devoted to God from his birth, he was bound to let his hair grow, and then God was with him; but when his hair was cut, God left him. While his great strength remained, he tore a lion asunder; he broke all the cords with which he was bound; he slew a thousand Philistines with the jaw-bone of an ass; and when he fell in love with a harlot in Gaza, and the Philistines beset the city gates, he carried away the gate and gate-posts of the city with him, when he made his way out and escaped. But afterwards he fell in love with Delilah, another

of the Philistine women, who cut off his hair, then she betrayed him to the Philistines, who out his eyes, and made him grind in a mill. length, when thousands of the Philistines gathered together to make sport with Samson order to revenge himself of the Philistines, a destroy the enemies of Israel, he pulled down house upon their heads and his own.

Eli, the high-priest, is said to have judged forty years; but he is not supposed to be o the extraordinary judges who delivered them, rather to have been made an ordinary magist perhaps over some part of the land. The la these extraordinary judges was Samuel the phet, the son of Hannah, a pious woman, wh no child before, and requested of God to giv one. Of this woman it is related, that she was greatly provoked and grieved in spirit prayed to God at the tabernacle, and she away cheerful. As her son Samuel was requ of the Lord, so he was given to the Lord, and brought up at the tabernacle in Shiloh, unde care of Eli the high-priest, where he w on the service of the tabernacle as a L being the first-born, and being given to God. was also a prophet, for God called him three in one night when he was a child, and told what calamities should befal the house of El high-priest. Though Eli loved and honoured himself, yet he did not restrain his sons from edness. As a token of God's displeasure ag the house of Eli, his two sons were slain by *Philistines in* battle, and the high-priesthood

into another branch of Aaron's family. As for Eli himself, when he heard that the ark of God was taken by the Philistines, he fainted for grief, and falling down backward, he brake his neck. The Philistines having obtained possession of the ark of God, brought it into the house of their idol Dagon, and the idol fell down and broke off his head and his hands upon the threshold. In several cities where the Philistines afterwards placed it, God destroyed many of the inhabitants, and smote the rest with sore diseases. At length, being convinced that these afflictions befel them on account of the ark, they put it into a new cart drawn by two milch-kine, whose calves were shut up at home, and yet they carried it directly into the land of Israel, to Bethshemesh. There the men of Bethshemesh looked into the ark, which was utterly forbidden, and God smote many of them with a great slaughter, and they sent the ark away to Kirjath-jearim. When the Philistines again made war upon Israel, Samuel offered a burnt-offering, and prayed to the Lord, and God fought against the Philistines with thunder from heaven, and scattered and destroyed them.

During Samuel's administration, he travelled through the land every year, and judged Israel with great honour and justice for many years; but in his old age he made his sons judges, and they oppressed and abused the people. On this occasion they requested that they might have a king, like the rest of the nations. Samuel would have advised them against it, because God was their king, but they still persisted in desiring a man for a king;

and being admonished of God, he complied with their desire, and appointed a king over them.

SAMUEL, & I. CHRONICLES.

OF THE GOVERNMENT OF ISRAEL UNDER THEIR KINGS; AND FIRST, OF SAUL AND DAVID.

The first king of Israel was Saul, a very tall young man, the son of Kish, a Benjamite. Saul was sent by his father to seek some asses that he had lost, and asking Samuel about them, Samuel took him aside privately, and anointed him king of Israel; and afterwards God chose and determined Saul to be king by casting lots among the tribes and families of Israel. Saul governed well at first for a little time, but afterwards he disobeyed the word of God in several instances, and God rejected him, and chose in his room David, of the tribe of Judah, who is called "the man after God's own heart."

David was the youngest son of Jesse, and grandson of Obed, who was the son of Boaz by Ruth his wife. Ruth was a woman of Moab, who married Mahlon, a Jew, the son of Naomi, when they came to sojourn in Moab, because of a famine in Israel. After her husband died in the land of Moab, she followed her mother-in-law, Naomi, into the land of Israel, and took the God of Israel for her God. In process of time Boaz, a rich man, who was near of kin to her former husband, married her, and so she became the great grandmother of *David.*

David being the youngest son of a large family, he was bred up to keep his father's sheep. Thus employed, he killed a lion and a bear which came to rob his father's flock. When God appointed David to be king of Israel, he sent Samuel secretly to anoint him with oil at Bethlehem, in the midst of his brethren. David was first introduced at court by his skill in music; for when the evil spirit of melancholy came upon Saul, he sent for him to play on the harp to refresh him. When Goliath the giant challenged the men of Israel, David undertook the combat, and slew him with a sling and a stone. Saul afterwards sent him out against the Philistines, and he slew many thousands of them; but Saul then began to bear him an ill-will, from mere envy, because the women of Israel sung to their instruments of music, "Saul had slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," and he threw a javelin at him, and often attempted to kill him. Saul married his second daughter Michal to David, but he required of him the slaughter of a hundred Philistines instead of her dowry, hoping that David himself would be slain in the attempt. All the people of Israel loved David, and so did Jonathan the son of Saul, who often screened him from his father's malice. When Saul ordered his servants to kill David, he fled from place to place in the land of Israel, and was hunted like a partridge on the mountains, till at last he was forced to hide himself twice among the Philistines. When he was at Gath the first time, he feigned himself mad, lest Achish the king of Gath should kill him. To save his father's house from Saul's rage, David

desired the king of Moab to let his father and mother dwell there, but he himself went into the land of Judah.

Saul further manifested his rage against David by slaying fourscore and five persons of the priests of the Lord, because he supposed they had concealed David, and did not tell the king where he was. At that time David had gathered together about four hundred men; his band afterwards increased to six hundred. But all this time he avoided Saul, and fled from him continually, by shifting his place whenever Saul pursued him; and at last was forced to go into the land of the Philistines again. David never attempted to kill Saul, but he spared his life twice when he had it in his power to kill him. The kindness of David softened the heart of Saul towards him for the present; but his envy and malice were so deeply rooted, that they prevailed above all the principles of kindness and gratitude. At last the Philistines invaded Israel, and Saul was in great distress, because God gave him no directions, nor answered him by dreams, nor by the priests nor prophets; and he inquired of a woman who had a familiar spirit, and there he was told by an apparition of something in the shape of Samuel, that he and his son should die on the morrow: and accordingly the Philistines slew several of his sons, and wounded him sorely in the battle, and then he fell upon his own sword, and slew himself. Meanwhile David had fled a second time to Achish, king of Gath, and had been just then employed in destroying the Amalekites, who had plundered the city of Ziklag, where

he dwelt, and carried away his wives. David offered his services to the Philistines; but he always avoided fighting against the Israelites; moreover, the lords of the Philistines at this time would not suffer him to continue in their army; which was done by the kind providence of God, that David might not fight against Israel. On the death of Saul, David made a very fine elegy upon him and Jonathan his son, and went up to Hebron, a city of Judah, by God's direction, where the men of Judah made him their king; but Ishbosheth, another of the sons of Saul, reigned then over the rest of the tribes of Israel. At length Ishbosheth quarrelled with Abner, the general of his army, whereupon Abner joined with David; and after this, two of Ishbosheth's own servants slew him in his bed. David reigned at Hebron seven years and a half; and then all Israel came to him and chose him for their king, and brought him up to Jerusalem. The first thing David did when he came to Jerusalem, was to take the strong hold of Zion from the Jebusites, who had held it to that day, and he called it the city of David. The ark of God was still at Kirjath-jearim, whence David, by God's direction, now fetched it up to Jerusalem in triumph, and placed it in Zion. He also piously designed to build a house for the ark of God, which had hitherto dwelt in curtains; but God did not encourage him, because he had shed much blood; but promised that he should have a son, who should build Him a house.

After this David had many battles, and was victorious over his enemies round about him;

namely, the Philistines and Moabites, the Syrians and Edomites. In the government of Israel, David executed judgment and justice among all the people. The chief blemishes of David's life were his adultery with Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, and his pride in numbering the people of Israel. In the first of these sins, besides the heinous crime of adultery in the sight of God, there was vile ingratitude and base conduct towards Uriah, who at that time was abroad, fighting for him against the Ammonites. David also artfully tried to hide it from Uriah and from the world; and when he could not persuade Uriah to go to his own house, he sent an order to Joab his general, that he should set Uriah in the hottest of the battle, and retire from him, and leave him to be slain. After the death of Uriah, David added Bathsheba to the rest of his wives, and she bare him a son. At length David was convinced of his sin, by an ingenious parable of Nathan the prophet, concerning a rich man who robbed his neighbour of an ewe-lamb, though he had large flocks of his own.* The displeasure of God against David for his sin was manifest in that He struck the child that was born with sickness and death, and threatened David that the sword should never depart from his house, and that his own wives should be publicly abused.

* David testified his deep repentance for this sin in the fifty-first Psalm, and perhaps also in some others; yet God saw it proper to punish him severely, because he "had given the enemies of God occasion to blaspheme," *2 Sam. xii. 14.*

David on this account met with heavy troubles in his family, especially from three of his sons, namely, Amnon, Absalom, and Adonijah. Amnon defiled his sister Tamar by force, upon which Absalom slew him, and then fled out of the land for fear of justice. After two years, when David was pacified, Absalom returned, and by his subtle carriage raised a rebellion against the king his father, and made himself king. David being forced to flee from Jerusalem, Absalom entered the city, and defiled his father's concubines publicly. Absalom's chief counsellor in this rebellion was Ahithophel, who when he saw that his last counsel was not followed, went home and hanged himself. As Absalom was riding under an oak in the day of battle, he was caught by the hair of the head, and hung between heaven and earth, where Joab, David's general, found him, and stabbed him to the heart, and thus put an end to his rebellion and his life. The pride of David's heart in numbering all the people of the tribes of Israel, that he might know how great a king he was, was thus punished: God gave him leave to choose one of three punishments, either seven years' famine, or three months of war, or three days' pestilence. David chose the famine, or the pestilence, rather than war; for he desired rather to fall into the hands of God than of man; and God sent upon the land a pestilence, that destroyed seventy thousand men in three days' time.

When David saw the angel of the Lord stand between heaven and earth, having a drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem, he and

the elders of Israel fell upon their faces, clothe
in sackcloth: David confessed his crime, an
prayed that the anger of God might fall on himself
rather than on the people; and God bade th
prophet Gad order David to build an altar, an
offer sacrifices on that very spot of ground, on th
threshing-floor of Ornan: when David prayed
fire came from heaven and consumed the sacrifices
David had yet troubles to meet from his so
Adonijah. When David was old, Adonijah se
himself up for king; this insolence seems to hav
been encouraged by David's too great indulgenc
from his youth. Under this trouble David pro
claimed Solomon, the son of Bathsheba, king, i
in his own life-time; and Zadok the priest, an
Nathan the prophet, anointed him king of Israel
Solomon was preferred, though a younger brother
because God chose him to the kingdom, and gav
David some notice of it. Adonijah submitted him
self to Solomon, who spared him for that time
though for a new fault he put him to death after
wards. David reigned in all forty years, and the
he died in his bed in peace.

Besides being a musician, a warrior and a king
David was a great poet and a prophet; he wrote th
greater part of the book of Psalms, which are th
finest pieces of ancient poesy, and he was calle
"The sweet Psalmist of Israel." These Psalm
were written by divine inspiration; for in some o
them there are many things evidently foretol
concerning Christ, Luke xxiv. 44. Acts ii. 29, 30
and he had a particular revelation made to him b
the Spirit of God of the pattern of the temple

which Solomon his son was to build, also of the orders of the priests and Levites, and of several things relating to the worship of God, which he gave to his son Solomon. David did much towards the building of this temple before his death, for he made a vast preparation of gold and silver, and jewels, and other materials, and gave the pattern of every thing to his son Solomon, as he received it of God.

I. KINGS, & II. CHRONICLES.

OF THE REIGN OF SOLOMON AND REHOBOAM OVER ALL ISRAEL, AND THE DIVISION OF THE NATION INTO TWO KINGDOMS.

The general character of Solomon was, that he was the wisest of men. His wisdom towards God appeared in that he asked not long life, nor riches, nor honours, but understanding and knowledge to govern so great a people. The first instance of his wisdom in the government was in his deciding the quarrel between two women who contended about a child, and giving the child to the true mother. He commanded the child to be divided in two, that each woman might have half; then the tenderness and love of the true mother appeared in yielding up her pretensions to it, rather than see it divided. Solomon took special care for the worship of God: he built that temple for which David had made so large a preparation.

It was a most glorious palace, built of cedar and fir, and olive wood, and hewn stone, with most amazing expense of gold and silver, and brass, and precious stones, both for the adorning of the house itself, and for the holy vessels thereof. He built also two distinct courts about it, one for the people of Israel, and one for the priests,* all which were called "the Temple,"

The temple was built in imitation of the tabernacle of Moses and the court thereof, but with vast and universal improvement in the grandeur, riches, and magnificence of it, according to the pattern that David received from God, and gave to Solomon. This sacred edifice was reared on mount

* In this temple of Solomon there does not seem to be any "court of the Gentiles," but only "the court of the priests," in which the house of God or sanctuary stood, and "the court of the people," to which all Israel resorted: nor can I find the Gentiles forbidden by any express word of God. See 2 Chron. vi. 32. One was "the outer court," and the other "the inner court." 2 Chron. iv. 9. and 1 Kings vi. 36. Nor were the people excluded from the inner court. See 2 Chron. xxiii. 10. In the second temple, which was built by Zerubbabel, after the captivity, we do not read of any "court of the Gentiles," at the building of it. But in following years, when there were more frequent communications and transactions with Gentiles, there was a partition made, called Chell, to divide them from the Jews, and the other part of the outer court was left for the Gentiles. In the temple which Herod built, and which was in our Saviour's time, there was a court made on purpose for the Gentiles, and those Jews which were unclean. But this division does not sufficiently appear to be of divine appointment, though, it must be confessed, "the partition wall" in Eph. ii. 14. seems to refer to it.

Moriah, not very far from mount Zion in Jerusalem: it was the place where Abraham was called to offer his son Isaac; and where God appeared to David when he stopped the pestilence, and gave him a miraculous token of his acceptance, by fire from heaven consuming his sacrifice. This temple was dedicated to God by assembling all the men of Israel, by bringing thither the ark, and the holy things from Zion, by a devout prayer to God, by music and praises, by a feast of seven days, and a vast number of sacrifices. God was pleased to show his approbation of it by filling the house with a cloud of glory, to represent his taking possession of it; He sent fire down from heaven to consume the sacrifices; and He appeared in the night to Solomon, and assured Him he had heard his prayer, and chosen that place for a house of sacrifice to Himself.

The reign of Solomon was eminently glorious—God gave him prodigious treasures and magnificent state, and spread the fame of his greatness and wisdom over all nations. The princes round about him coveted his friendship, and gave him their assistance and many presents, and the queen of Sheba came to visit him. She was astonished at the sight of his grandeur and wisdom, and confessed that the one half of it was not told her. But in process of time Solomon forgot his great obligations to God; he took wives and concubines in multitudes, and out of the idolatrous nations; and by them his heart was so far led away after other gods, that he built places of worship for them very near Jerusalem, and offered

sacrifices to them. As a punishment for these crimes, God stirred up several enemies against him, and particularly Jeroboam, his own servant. The pretence of this man for disturbing the government was Solomon's building an expensive palace for Pharaoh's daughter, who was his queen, and the raising heavy taxes for that and other buildings. Jeroboam was so far encouraged in this opposition to Solomon, that Ahijah the prophet, being sent of God, caught hold of his garment when he met him in the field, and rent it into twelve pieces, and gave ten of them to Jeroboam, signifying that God had given him ten of the tribes of Israel, and had left the posterity of Solomon one tribe, that is, Judah and Benjamin, which were afterwards united into one, under the name of Jews. This however was not fulfilled in Solomon's day, for it pleased God to withhold these calamities from the house of Solomon till the days of his son.

It is generally supposed that the book of Ecclesiastes is a sort of proof that Solomon repented, because he there describes the vanity of every labour and every enjoyment under the sun, and sums up all in the "fear of God and keeping his commandments, as the whole duty and chief interest of man." Solomon reigned forty years; and though he had such a shameful number of wives and concubines, yet he had left but one son behind him, whose name was Rehoboam, to succeed him in the kingdom of Israel. Though Solomon had written so many excellent lessons of morality and piety for his son in the book of Proverbs, and given *him* so many warnings, yet he followed evil

courses; and Solomon himself seems to intimate it in the book of Ecclesiastes, chap. ii. 19, "Who knoweth whether his son will be a wise man or a fool?" On the death of his father, and his accession to the throne, Rehoboam despised the counsel of the old men, and hearkened to the advice of rash young men; he threatened the nation of Israel to "make their yoke heavier" than his father had done, that is, to lay heavier taxes upon them, and in consequence all the tribes of Israel, except Judah and Benjamin, made Jeroboam their king; and thus the nation was divided into two kingdoms, which were afterwards called the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel.

OF THE KINGS OF ISRAEL.

After the people of Israel were separated from Judah, nineteen kings reigned over them, every one of whom was idolatrous and wicked;—namely, Jeroboam the first, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, Joash, Jeroboam the second, Zachariah, Shallum, Menahem, Pekahiah, Pekah, and Hoshea. Among these the most remarkable were Jeroboam the first, Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehu, Joash, Pekah, and Hoshea. As for Jeroboam, instead of worshipping God, who dwelt between the cherubs in the temple at Jerusalem, he made two golden images which were called calves, and set them up in two distant parts of the land of Israel, namely, Dan and Bethel, and taught the people to worship before them. The worship he appointed was something

like the worship which God appointed at Jerusalem, with an altar and priests, and sacrifices and incense; but it differed essentially from the worship at Jerusalem, for besides the forsaking of the temple and the place which God appointed, he also made priests of the lowest of the people, instead of the sons of Levi, and ordained feasts at a different time from those which God had appointed, and set up the images of calves to represent the presence of God. Jeroboam introduced this idolatry, because he feared, if the people went up frequently to sacrifice at Jerusalem, they would be tempted to return again to Rehoboam king of Judah. The displeasure of God was manifested against this worship which Jeroboam set up, by his sending a prophet to the altar of Bethel, who foretold that a son of the house of David, Josiah by name, should burn the bones of Jeroboam's priests upon the altar. As a sign that this prophecy should be fulfilled, the prophet foretold that the altar should be rent asunder, and the ashes poured out, both which were fulfilled immediately; and Jeroboam's hand withered when he stretched it out to lay hold of the prophet, though at the prayer of the prophet God restored it again. God also threatened Jeroboam and his family with utter destruction, so that none of them should find a grave, except Abijah his youngest son, because there were found in him some good inclinations toward the God of Israel.

Omri, the captain of the host of Israel, was made king by the people when Zimri set up himself. He besieged Zimri, his predecessor, so closely

in Tirzah, the royal city, that Zimri burnt himself and the palace together, and died. He built Samaria for the royal city on a hill; and he walked in all the sinful ways of Jeroboam.

Ahab was the son of Omri, who followed the wicked ways of his predecessors: he sinned against God and man grievously, and provoked God beyond all who were before him. To signify his displeasure against Ahab, God sent Elijah the prophet to reprove him, and to foretel that there should be neither dew nor rain for several years. which accordingly came to pass. During this famine, Elijah was appointed to hide himself by the brook Cherith, and the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning and the evening, and he drank of the water of the brook. When the brook was dried up, God sent him to a woman of Sarepta, near Sidon, to be maintained by her, when she had only a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse; but God wonderfully increased the oil and the meal, so that the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, till God sent rain upon the land. Elijah was also empowered to work other miracles in this woman's family, to prove that he was sent from God. When her son died, the prophet raised him to life again.

In the reign of Ahab, God gave special deliverance to Israel; for though Ahab was so great a sinner, yet God made Israel victorious over the Syrians who invaded them, because Benhadad the king of Syria boasted, and blasphemed God. Among other transgressions of Ahab against God, besides the idolatry of the calves, he also set up

the idol Baal: he caused Israel to worship it, and by the influence of his wife Jezebel, slew a great number of the prophets of the Lord. Some however were saved; for Obadiah, the governor of Ahab's house, hid a hundred of them in two caves, and fed them with bread and water, while Elijah fled wheresoever he could find a hiding place. At length Elijah boldly met Ahab, and bid him summon all Israel together, and the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, that a sacrifice might be offered to Baal and to Jehovah, to make an experiment which was the true God. This was soon manifest, for fire came down from heaven and consumed Elijah's sacrifice, after he had poured great quantities of water upon it; but the prophets of Baal attempted in vain to procure fire on their altar, though they cut themselves with knives, and cried aloud to their god. This had such an influence upon the people that they fell upon their faces, and acknowledged Jehovah to be the true God; and then, at the command of Elijah, the people slew all the prophets of Baal. The divine approbation of this conduct of Elijah was farther manifested in the immediate torrents of rain which put an end to the famine. One of the most remarkable sins of Ahab against man, was his coveting the vineyard of Naboth, and by the help of false witnesses stoning Naboth to death for blasphemy, and taking possession of his land. At length Ahab, in opposition to the prophecy of Micaiah, went to fight with the king of Syria, and received a mortal wound. The judgment of God against Ahab appeared in his *death; for* the dogs licked up his blood on that spot

of ground where Naboth's blood was shed, according to the prophecy of Elijah.

Ahaziah the son of Ahab, succeeded him in his kingdom, and followed his wicked ways. When Ahaziah was sick, he sent to inquire of Baalzebub, the God of Ekron, about his recovery; and because Elijah reproved him for it, he sent three captains each with fifty men, to make Elijah their prisoner; but Elijah called down fire from heaven, which consumed the first two of them with their troops; but he spared the third upon his entreaty, and then went down with him to King Ahaziah, and told him that he should surely die. Elijah at length left this world, not in the ordinary way of dying; he was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind by a chariot and horses of fire, and left his mantle behind him, which descended on Elisha, who was with him when he was taken up to heaven, and who had a double portion of the spirit of Elijah given him.

The following are some of the chief miracles and prophecies of Elisha:—1. He smote the waters of Jordan with Elijah's mantle, saying, *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* and the waters divided for him to pass over. 2. He cured the unwholesome water near Jericho, by casting salt into it. 3. He cursed some children that mocked and reproached him, and there came two she-bears out of the wood, and tore to pieces forty-two of them. 4. He brought water in a time of drought to supply three armies, namely, those of Edom, Judah, and Israel. 5. He increased the widow's pot of oil, that it was sufficient to pay her debts and maintain her family.

6. He promised a son to the Shunamite woman who entertained him, who was before barren, and raised this son to life again when he died. 7. He healed Naaman the Syrian of his leprosy, by bidding him wash in Jordan. 8. He pronounced the plague of leprosy on Gehazi, his own servant, for his covetousness and lying. 9. He made the iron head of an axe float on the water, that it might be restored to its owner. 10. He discovered the king of Syria's private counsels to the king of Israel, and smote his army with blindness. 11. He foretold vast plenty on the morrow, in the midst of a siege and famine in Samaria. 12. He foretold the death of Benhadad, the king of Syria, and that Hazael should succeed him, and treat Israel with cruelty.

Jehu was a captain, who was anointed king by the prophet, whom Elisha sent for that purpose, according to the appointment of God and Elijah. The great work for which God raised up Jehu to the kingdom was to destroy the worship of Baal, and to bring the threatened judgments of God on the house of Ahab for their wickedness. He executed this bloody work upon the house of Ahab in three ways:—1. He shot with an arrow, Jehoram, the son of Ahab, who was then king, and cast him upon the land of Naboth, whom Ahab slew. 2. He commanded Jezebel, the wicked and idolatrous queen-mother, to be thrown out of the window, and the dogs ate her up. 3. He ordered the seventy remaining sons of Ahab to be slain in Samaria, and their heads to be brought him in baskets. In order to destroy the worship of Baal, he gathered the prophets of Baal, and his priests

and his worshippers, together into his temple, under a pretence of a great sacrifice to Baal; and then commanded them all to be slain with the sword, and the image to be burnt, and the temple to be destroyed. Jehu did not continue to obey God in all things; for though he executed the vengeance of God against Ahab, and the worshippers of Baal, yet he maintained the idolatry of Jeroboam, namely, the calves of Dan and Bethel.

Joash the son of Jehoahaz, the son of Jehu, next reigned over Israel. When Elisha was upon his death-bed, this king came down to see him, and wept over him, yet he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam. According to the prophecy of dying Elisha, he smote the Syrians thrice, who had oppressed Israel in the days of his father. One remarkable miracle is recorded concerning Elisha after his death. They buried a man, the year following, in his sepulchre, and as soon as he touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood upon his feet. When Amaziah, king of Judah, provoked Joash to war, he routed the army of Judah, and took the king prisoner: he brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and plundered the house of the Lord, and the king's house, of all the gold and silver vessels.

Pekah, king of Israel, joined with the king of Syria to invade Judah, but he was repulsed according to the prophecy of Isaiah. In his days Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, took many cities in Galilee, and carried many of the people captive to Assyria. Pekah was slain by Hoshea who made himself king and was the last king of Israel, for in his days

Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, took the city of Samaria, bound Hoshea, the king, in prison, carried multitudes of Israel captive into Assyria, and distributed them into several distant countries, from which they have never returned to this day. Shalmaneser was provoked to do this by the conduct of Hoshea, who had submitted to him, and afterwards plotted and rebelled against him. These heavy judgments were inflicted by God, because that the people of Israel, with all their kings, after their separation from the house of David, had been guilty of continual idolatry, in opposition to the many precepts and warnings of God, by the writings of Moses, and the voice of all the prophets. When the people were driven out of Samaria and the other cities of Israel, several of the heathen nations were placed there, and each worshipped their own gods and idols; wherefore the Lord sent lions amongst them, and destroyed many of them. On this occasion the king of Assyria sent a Jewish priest thither, to teach them the worship of the God of Israel, and they feared the God of Israel; yet they could not lay aside their own idolatries, for they continued to serve their own graven images also in many following generations. In process of time they forsook their idols, worshipped the true God only, and submitted themselves to the Jewish religion, so as to receive the five books of Moses; but they had a temple of their own built on mount Gerizim, and in the New Testament are called Samaritans.

II. CHRONICLES X.—XXXVI.

OF THE KINGS OF JUDAH.

After the division of the kingdoms, twenty monarchs reigned over Judah, namely, Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, (the queen,) Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jothan, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, Ammon, Josiah, Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. A few of them were very religious, some very wicked, and others of an indifferent or mixed character. After the ten tribes had made Jeroboam their king, Rehoboam raised a great army out of Judah and Benjamin to recover the ten tribes, but God by his prophet forbade them to proceed; for the present they desisted, but in the following times there were bloody wars between Judah and Israel. Under the government of Rehoboam, the people of Judah fell into idolatry and shameful sins, whereupon God was angry, and Shishak, king of Egypt, plundered the temple and the king's house of their treasures, in the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign. So short-lived was the supreme grandeur and glory of the Jewish church and state.

Abijah, the son of Rehoboam, made a speech, and pleaded against Israel, when Jeroboam led them to war against him; he reproved them for their departure from the true worship of God, and from the house of David: and when they would not hearken, but set upon him in battle, he and his

army cried unto the Lord, and shouted, and slew five hundred thousand men. A striking example of divine success!

Of Asa, the son of Abijah the king of Judah, it is recorded, that he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, and destroyed the idols which had been set up in the land. When he called upon the Lord, and trusted in him, he defeated the army of the Ethiopians, who came against him, though they were a thousand thousand. Asa in his old age fell into distrust of God, and gave the treasure that remained in the house of God, and in the king's house, to the king of Syria, to guard and help him against Baasha, the king of Israel; and he imprisoned the prophet who reproved him for it. It is also recorded that in the disease of his feet (which is supposed to have been the gout) he sought not the Lord, but only the physicians; "and he slept with his fathers."

His son Jehoshaphat walked in the first and best ways of his father David, and God was with him. This pious king appointed Levites and priests throughout all the cities of Judah, to teach the law of the Lord; and he set judges in the land, with a solemn charge to do justice without bribery, and God gave him very great treasures; and the fear of the Lord fell upon all the kingdoms round about Judah, so that for many years they made no war upon him.

Jehoshaphat, however, on one occasion sinned against God by joining in alliance with Ahab, the wicked king of Israel, whereby he was in great *danger* of being slain in a battle against the Syrians.

When Moab and Ammon joined their forces against Jehoshaphat, he proclaimed a fast through the land, and in the midst of the people he prayed earnestly to the Lord; when he went out to battle, he appointed the singers before the army to sing praises to the Lord, and his enemies fell upon one another till they were all slain.

Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat, was far from imitating his father's government in piety; for he slew all his own brethren, he walked in the ways of Ahab, king of Israel, and took his daughter Athaliah to wife. The displeasure of God was testified against Jehoram, in smiting him with such an incurable distemper, that his bowels fell out, and he died of sore diseases.

He was succeeded in the kingdom by Ahaziah, his youngest son, for all his eldest were slain in the camp by the Arabians. Ahaziah followed the evil practices of the house of Ahab, by the persuasions of his mother Athaliah, who was the grand-daughter of Omri; and when he went out with Jehoram, the king of Israel, against Jehu, he was slain by Jehu.

Athaliah his mother then seized the kingdom, and destroyed all the seed-royal of the house of Judah, except Joash, the son of Ahaziah, an infant of a year old, who was hid in the temple. As Athaliah counselled her son Ahaziah before, so she herself practised the idolatry of the house of Ahab; at length Jehoiada the high-priest stirred up the captains of the army, the Levites, and the chief of the people against Athaliah: he set Joash on the throne when he was seven years old, anointed

and proclaimed him king, then ordered the guards to slay Athaliah, and destroyed the worship of Baal.

Joash did that which was right in the sight of the Lord all the days of Jehoiada the priest, who was his uncle; he repaired the temple, and the vessels thereof, and restored the worship of God; but after Jehoiada's death, he was persuaded to change the worship of God for idols, and most ungratefully slew Zechariah, the son of Jehoiada, because he reproved the idolatry of the people. God punished him for his crime by sending an army of the Syrians against him, who pillaged the country, and by smiting him with sore diseases; and at last his own servants slew him on his bed.

Amaziah the son of Joash at first seemed to work righteousness, and hearkened to the voice of God and his prophets; but afterwards gaining a victory over the Edomites, he learned to worship the gods of Edom. Being puffed up with his success against Edom, he challenged the king of Israel to battle, and was routed shamefully, and was slain at last by a conspiracy of his own people.

Uzziah was made king at sixteen years old, in the room of his father Amaziah; he sought after God in the days of Zechariah the prophet, and God prospered his arms against all his enemies, and made his name great; but afterwards his heart was lifted up by his prosperity, and he assumed the priest's office, and burnt incense in the temple, though the priests opposed him. While he had a censer in his hand to burn the incense, the leprosy rose in his forehead, and he continued a leper *until his* death.

Jotham, the son of Uzziah, was a good king, and God blessed his arms, so that he brought the Ammonites under tribute.

Ahaz the son of Jotham walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, made images for Baal, and offered his children in sacrifice by fire, after the abominations of the heathens; for these crimes God suffered his land to be invaded by the king of Syria, and by the king of Israel: multitudes of his people were slain, and many captives were carried to Damascus and to Samaria, though the Israelites restored their captives again at the word of the prophet Oded. Ahaz also set aside the brazen altar which was before the Lord, and set up another in the court of the temple, according to the pattern of an altar he had seen at Damascus; and at last he fell in with the idolatry of the heathen nations. It is mentioned as a particular aggravation of his crimes, that even in the time of his distress he sinned the more against God; and because God did not help him, he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus; he cut in pieces the vessels of the house of God, shut up the doors of the temple, and set up idols in Jerusalem, and through all the land.

Hezekiah, the son Ahaz, made a great reformation, not only in Judah, but also in Ephraim and Manasseh; he brake the images, cut down their groves, destroyed their altars, repaired the temple, and restored the worship of the true God there. He gave a peculiar instance of his zeal against all manner of idolatry by breaking in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made in the

wilderness, because the people burned incense to it. In his reign was kept a most solemn passover; when he sent to all Israel, as well as to Judah, to invite them to keep the passover at Jerusalem, according to the appointment of God. Some of the people of Israel mocked the message, but many out of several tribes came to the passover, so that there was not the like since the time of Solomon. Many of these people were not sufficiently purified to keep the passover; but at the prayer of Hezekiah, the Lord pardoned and accepted them, though several things in this passover were not exactly conformable to the holy institution. As a token of the divine acceptance of Hezekiah's zeal and piety, God prospered him in his wars against his enemies, and enabled him to cast off the yoke of the king of Assyria while he trusted in him.

When Sennacherib, king of Assyria, invaded Judah, Hezekiah pusillanimously bribed him to depart with gold and silver taken from the house of God: this conduct was attended with very ill success, for some years after Sennacherib sent an army to take Jerusalem. In this distress, when Sennacherib sent Rabshakeh with blasphemies against God, and threatenings against the people Hezekiah humbled himself greatly, and spread th railing letter before the Lord in the temple, an prayed earnestly to God for deliverance. I answer to Hezekiah's prayer, Isaiah the proph assured him of deliverance: and the angel of t Lord slew in the camp of the Assyrians one hundr and fourscore and five thousand men at on *When Hezekiah* afterwards was sick near to dea

God heard his prayer, and assured him he should live fifteen years longer. As a sign to confirm his faith in his promise, the shadow returned backward ten degrees upon the dial of Ahaz; but after he had received all this mercy, in the vanity and pride of his heart, Hezekiah showed the messengers of the king of Babylon all his treasures. This pride was severely punished; for God told him by the prophet Isaiah, that all these treasures should be carried into Babylon: but because Hezekiah humbled himself, God deferred the execution of it till after his death.

Manasseh forsook the good ways of his father Hezekiah; he brought in idolatry of many kinds; he worshipped the sun, moon, and stars; he made his son pass through the fire; he used enchantments, and shed much innocent blood. These transgressions were punished, for the captains of the host of Assyria came up against Manasseh, took him among the thorns, bound him with fetters, and carried him into Babylon: in his affliction, he humbled himself greatly before God in prayer, whereupon God restored him to his kingdom, where he wrought a great reformation.

Amon restored the idolatry which Manasseh had once set up, but he never repented or returned to God as his father had done, and he was slain by his own servants.

Josiah the son of Amon began his reign at eight years old; at sixteen he sought after God; and at twenty he destroyed the altar and idols which his father Amon, the son of Manasseh, had set up. He repaired the temple, and restored

the worship of God, and finding a book of the law of the Lord by Moses, he rent his clothes, and mourned to think how little this law had been observed; he made further use of this book, for he read the words of it in the ears of all the elders of Judah, and the people, the priests, and the prophets, and made a covenant with the people of Judah to perform what was written in this book. The kingdom of Israel being now destroyed by the king of Assyria, Josiah spread his influence over those who remained in the land, and many of Israel as well as of Judah came to keep the passover. This passover of Josiah exceeded that in the days of Hezekiah, in the exact conformity of it to all the rules appointed by Moses, so that no such passover had been kept since the days of Samuel the prophet. Josiah destroyed all the remainder of the idolatry of Israel, which Jeroboam set up at Dan and Bethel: and slew the priests of the high-places, and burnt the bones of the priests that had been buried there upon the altar, according to the word which the old prophet spake to Jeroboam. Josiah at last went out to fight with the king of Egypt, without the direction of God, and he was slain, and great lamentation was made for him.

His son Jehoahaz succeeded him in the kingdom; when he had reigned three months, he was put in bonds by the king of Egypt, was carried thither, and there he died. The king of Egypt set up in his room Eliakim his brother, and gave him the name of Jehoiakim.

Jehoiakim did evil in the sight of the Lord;

several neighbouring nations beset him round about, and Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, sent up his forces against him, took some captives, and bound the king in fetters: he died in shame, his dead body being cast without the gates of Jerusalem, and denied a burial; and his young son Jehoiachin reigned in his stead.

When Jehoiachin (who is also called Jechoniah and Coniah) had reigned three months, Nebuchadnezzar took the city of Jerusalem, and carried him to Babylon, together with ten thousand captives, and rich treasures of silver and gold that remained in the temple and in the king's house.

The last king was Zedekiah (uncle of Jehoiachin), whom Nebuchadnezzar made king in Jerusalem. Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, to whom he had sworn subjection by the name of the true God, whereupon Nebuchadnezzar came up and took the city of Jerusalem again, after a siege of two years. When Zedekiah fled from the city, he was seized by the Babylonians; Nebuchadnezzar ordered his sons to be slain before his face, then his eyes were put out, he was bound with fetters of brass, and carried to Babylon, and there was no more a king in Judah. At this time, the king of Babylon burnt the temple of the Lord, the palace of the kings, and all the houses of Jerusalem: he brake down the walls of the city, and carried away the rest of the people captive; together with all the vessels of gold, silver, and brass, great and small, that belonged to the temple. The people were not punished thus, merely for the sins of their kings; for the princes, and the priests, and the

governor of the scattered people that rema
the land of Israel; but he was slain in a litt
by a faction under Ishmael, one of the seed
and there was nothing but confusion and d
in the land. Afterwards Johanan, the
Kareah, one of the captains under Gedaliah,
Ishmael and drove him out of the land; ye
afraid of the anger of the king of Babylon,
resentment of the murder of Gedaliah his go
he was tempted to fly into Egypt, and to
most of the people thither with him, whe
were dispersed into several cities. This
done by any divine order; but directly agai
word of the Lord, by the mouth of Jeremi
prophet, who was left among them in the
and they carried him also into Egypt with
The Jews behaved themselves no better a
their afflictions and distresses, for they pr
idolatry in Egypt with insolence, in opposi
the reproofs of Jeremiah the prophet; and Je
was ordered by the Lord to foretel the dest

EZRA, NEHEMIAH, ZECHARIAH, HAGGAI, AND MALACHI.

OF THE RETURN OF THE JEWS FROM CAPTIVITY IN BABYLON, AND THE REBUILDING THE CITY OF JERUSALEM AND THE TEMPLE.

The nation of the Jews continued in their captivity seventy years from its first commencement, for though the land lay not utterly destitute till the final destruction of Jerusalem, in the days of Zedekiah, which was between fifty and sixty years before their first release; yet, from their first captivity by Nebuchadnezzar in former reigns, their land was in some measure desolate seventy years, according to the prophecy of Jeremiah, Jer. xxv. 11, 12. That period was nearly accomplished, when Babylon was taken by Cyrus, the general of the army under Darius, the king of the Medes, and the Assyrian or Babylonian empire was finished. After Darius's death, Cyrus himself became king of Persia, and he not only granted the Jews a release, but gave them also a commission to rebuild the temple, and restored to them the vessels of gold and silver; and this he did by the hand of Sheshbazzar, a prince of Judah.

Now was that prophecy fulfilled which Isaiah had pronounced above a hundred years before, Isa. xliv. 28. that it was Cyrus who should say to Jerusalem, "Be thou built;" and to the temple, "Be thy foundation laid;" and chap. xlv. 13. who should "build the city of God, and release his captives."

Many persons and families of several tribes of Israel accepted this commission, and returned to their own land; yet it was chiefly those of Judah and Benjamin, with the priests, and several of the Levites, who returned, and were now all united under the name of Jews. The first leaders and directors were Zerubbabel, a prince of Judah, of the seed-royal, whose Chaldaic or Babylonish name was Sheshbazzar; he was their prince or captain, and Jeshua or Joshua was their high-priest. Immediately after their return, they made a large contribution toward the rebuilding of the temple, they gathered themselves together to Jerusalem, and they set up the altar of the God of Israel, and offered sacrifices upon it. While the builders laid the foundation of the temple, the priests and the Levites sung and praised the Lord with trumpets and other instruments, after the ordinance of David. On this interesting occasion, while the younger part of the people shouted for joy, many of the ancient fathers wept with a loud voice, when they remembered how much more glorious the first temple had been than the second was likely to be; for though the foundation of the second temple stood on the same compass of ground as the first, yet a company of poor exiles, returning from a long captivity, could not promise or hope for so glorious a building as the temple of Solomon, neither in the richness of the materials, nor in the magnificence and curiosity of the workmanship. See Prideaux's Connection, vol. i. p. 7, 201, edition MDCCCXX.

The Jews also generally suppose five things to

be wanting in the second temple, after it was finished, which belonged to the first; namely, (1.) The ark of the covenant, and the mercy-seat, which was upon it, with the cherubs of gold, together with the tables of stone in which the law was written, which were in the ark when it was brought into Solomon's temple. (2.) The Shechinah, or divine presence, in a cloud of glory on the mercy-seat. (3.) The Urim and Thummim, whence the oracle came, or divine answers to their inquiries. (4.) The holy fire upon the altar, which came from heaven. (5.) The spirit of prophecy. For though Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi lived while the second temple was building, and prophesied after it was built, yet on their death the prophetic spirit ceased from among the Jews.

The first hindrance they found in the building of the temple arose from the Samaritans, who desired to join with them in their building, and because the Jews forbade them, gave them continual trouble in the days of Cyrus. When Artaxerxes the first came to the throne of Persia, these people wrote an accusation against the Jews that the city of Jerusalem had been rebellious in former times; whereupon Artaxerxes caused the work to cease till the second year of Darius Hystaspes. Notwithstanding these discouragements, the prophets of God which were with the Jews encouraged and required them in the name of the Lord to go on with the work of the temple; for several of them were too negligent, and God punished them for it with scarcity of corn and wine. The governors of the provinces under the

Persian court at this time seeing them renew their building, sent to inquire concerning the order which Cyrus gave for it; and Darius, having found this order among the records of Babylon, gave a fresh command for the rebuilding of the house of God. Through many delays, arising partly from the negligence of the Jews, and partly from the opposition of their enemies, the temple was twenty years in building: nor was it finished till the sixth year of the reign of Darius, at which time they dedicated it with many sacrifices, and kept the passover with joy.

The Jews were farther encouraged by Artaxerxes the second, king of Persia, who gave Ezra, the priest and scribe, a letter and decree to encourage the Jews yet remaining in Babylon, to go up to Jerusalem, and establish the worship of the true God there. This second Artaxerxes is supposed to be Artaxerxes Longimanus, the same Ahasuerus who made Esther his queen, and so became very friendly to the Jews. The king and his counsellors freely offered much silver and gold for this work; and being sensible of the greatness and power of the God of the Jews, whom he calls "the God of heaven," he sought to secure His favour for himself and his family, and pronounced a speedy sentence of death, banishment, loss of goods, or imprisonment, on those who should dare to hinder this building. On receiving his commission, Ezra proclaimed a day of fasting and prayer, to seek the assistance of God; for he was ashamed to ask the king for soldiers to be their guard, because he had *told the king* of the power and the mercy of their God.

When Ezra came to Jerusalem, he delivered the orders of the king to the governors of the provinces, and the gold and silver to those who had the care of the building, and so promoted the work; when he was informed that many of the Jews had mingled themselves in marriages with the heathens, he, together with the more religious part of the Jews, humbled themselves before God for all their former iniquities, in an excellent prayer, and brought them into a covenant and an oath to put away their strange wives. It should be observed, that none of the Jews of either sex might marry with a Gentile of any nation, unless they were made proselytes; and even then it is supposed the Canaanites of the seven nations (Deut. vii.), and the males among the Moabites and Ammonites, were excluded for ever: Deut. xxiii. 3.

The Jews proceeded to rebuild the city of Jerusalem, which the Babylonian army had broken down and burnt. This work was carried on under the direction of Nehemiah the Jew, who was a cup-bearer to Artaxerxes the king of Persia. When Nehemiah heard of the continuance of the desolations made by the enemies, he fasted and prayed to God, and then he obtained leave of Artaxerxes the king to go up to Jerusalem, and rebuild the city of the sepulchres of his fathers. He also received order for the governors of the provinces to assist him, and to give timber out of the king's forest. Nehemiah rode round the city by night, and took a private survey of the ruins thereof, and appointed a particular part of the walls and gates to be repaired by particular persons and their

companies. While engaged in this part of their work, Sanballat the Samaritan, and Tobiah the Ammonite, and their accomplices, at first laughed the Jews to scorn, and then conspired to fight against them while they were at work. But Nehemiah encouraged the Jews to trust in their God, and appointed every man that laboured in the work to have a weapon ready to defend himself. Nehemiah also wrought great reformation among them; he reproved those that took usury, and oppressed their brethren; and he set himself for an example, who, though he was governor twelve years, took no salary, but maintained himself and one hundred and fifty Jews at his own charge. When the city was built, on the first day of the seventh month all the people were gathered together in one street, and Ezra the priest and scribe read in the book of the law, and gave the sense of the words, that they might see their past sins and errors, and might be instructed to yield a more regular and exact obedience for the time to come; and this being done, he blessed the great God, and all the people answered, Amen, Amen.*

* It is a remark of Dr. Prideaux, that though Ezra's authority and government expired before this time, yet he went on as a skilful scribe of the law of God, to preach righteousness, to perfect the reformation, to gather several parts of scripture together, to set forth correct copies of them, and to bring all things in Church and State to the rules thereof: and this he did by the assistance of the next governor, Nehemiah, doing the same things by his authority, which before he did by his *own.*

They kept the feast of tabernacles, by dwelling in booths made of branches of trees, seven days together, as God had commanded by Moses, and they read and explained the book of the law every day of the seven. On the twenty-fourth day of the seventh month they kept a fast; one-fourth part of the day they confessed their sins, and another fourth part they read in the book of the law, and then they entered into a covenant with an oath to be the Lord's people, and the princes, and the priests, and the Levites, sealed it. When the people were to be disposed of in their respective habitations, the rulers dwelt at Jerusalem, and the rest of the priests and people cast lots to bring one in ten to dwell at Jerusalem, and nine parts in the other cities, that the land might be peopled. At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem, the holy city, the Levites came from all places to Jerusalem, and joined with the priests and the rulers in two large companies, and gave thanks, and offered sacrifices and sung the praises of God, so that the joy of Jerusalem was heard afar off. Nehemiah was zealous in promoting a further reformation; he turned Tobiah the Ammonite out of his lodging in the temple, which Eliashib the high-priest had prepared for him; he established the portion of the fruits of the earth which belonged to the Levites; he forbade the profanation of the sabbath, by buying and selling and bearing burdens; and punished the Jews who married strange wives. He drove away one of the sons of Joiada, the son of Eliashib the high-priest, for marrying the daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, who had

hindered the Jews so much in their building several years before.*

It is supposed that Nehemiah was assisted in this difficult work by Malachi, the last of the prophets, who prophesied about this time, for he doth not reprove them for neglect of building as Haggai did, ch. i. 4, 9; nor does he speak of the finishing of the temple, as Zechariah did, iv. 7, 9. But supposing that work already done, he reproved them about their marriage of strangers, and of several wives, or of taking concubines, Mal. ii. 11, 14, 16; their robbing God of their tithes, chap. iii. &c.; their polluting the altar, and neglect of offering God the best, chap. i.; which were the very things that Nehemiah corrected in his last reformation.

HISTORIES OF DETACHED INDIVIDUALS.

THE HISTORY OF JOB.

Job was the most religious man in the land of Uz; he had ten children and very great riches. He is supposed to have lived in or before the day of Moses, because there is not the least intimation of any transactions of God with Israel in the whole book of Job. As an instance of Job's piety. it is related concerning him in his prosperous state, that when his children had been feasting each other in

* This young man's name was Manasseh, as Josephus informs us.

their turns, Job offered sacrifices for them, lest they should have sinned and provoked God in the seasons of their mirth. Among the very severe afflictions that fell upon Job, God permitted the devil, by kindling of lightning, and by stirring up robbers and plunderers among his heathen neighbours, to bereave him of all his cattle and his wealth in one day, and to destroy all his children, even seven sons and three daughters, by a tempest which blew down the house in which they were feasting. Satan was also suffered to vent his malice upon the person of Job, so far as to smite him with sore boils from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. The design of God in these providences towards Job was to try the strength of his piety, and to set him up as an example of patience, both in the exercise and in the rewards of it. James v. 11.

The behaviour of Job under his trial was most exemplary; he blessed the name of the Lord, and did not murmur at his providence. It was a further aggravation of Job's distress that his wife tempted him to abandon all religion, because God suffered him to be thus afflicted. Three of his friends came from the neighbouring places to mourn with him and comfort him. This patience of Job continued in its perfect exercise for seven days; he sat down in ashes, and was silent under the hand of God. At length he manifested impatience in cursing the day on which he was born. When Job's friends saw him to be so dreadfully afflicted, they rashly concluded he had been guilty of very great sins, notwithstanding his outward

profession of piety, and therefore they severely reproved him for his grievous complaints. Job answered their charges, by maintaining against them all, this great truth, that God does sometimes afflict those who are innocent, for wise and unsearchable reasons; and he vindicated his own innocence, placing his trust in God. But under the violence of his distress, and the most unjust accusations of his friends, he sometimes spoke words of unreasonable despair, and sometimes he used rash and unbecoming language against the great God, and vindicated himself too much, as though he had been perfectly innocent before God as well as before men.

At last Elihu, a fourth friend, who was younger than the rest, and had come to visit Job, took a middle way to end this controversy, and spoke more agreeably to the truth: and though he reproved the three friends for asserting that God would never afflict any innocent man so much as Job was afflicted, yet he severely reproved Job for insisting so much on his own innocence before God. The foundation of Elihu's argument was the supreme majesty and holiness of God, the meanness and sinfulness of the best of men in his sight; his sovereign dominion over all things, and the unsearchableness of his wisdom and conduct toward men. At length God himself interposed, and in a voice out of a whirlwind greatly confirmed the sentiments and opinions of Elihu, by asserting and displaying his own supreme wisdom and power, his grandeur and dominion over all things. On this, Job confessed his folly, ab *horred himself* for his sin under the apprehension

of the holiness and the majesty of God, and repented in dust and ashes. God also expressed his disapprobation of the three friends of Job, of their false accusations of Job, and their wrong sentiments concerning God himself and his conduct, and bade them offer a sacrifice of atonement, and entreat Job to pray for them; while Job prayed for his friends, God released him from all his afflictions, and afterwards gave him ten children, as he had at first; he doubled his estate, and prolonged his life to four generations.

THE HISTORY OF JONAH.

Jonah was a prophet who lived about the time of Jeroboam the second, king of Israel, Jonah i. 1. 2 Kings xiv. 25. God sent him to Nineveh, to pronounce destruction upon that great city for their wickedness; but Jonah disobeyed God, for he took shipping and fled toward Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord, because he supposed that the mercy of God would spare Nineveh after he had pronounced destruction upon it, and then he should be counted a false prophet. In this voyage there arose a terrible tempest, which endangered the ship; and Jonah being conscious of his own guilt, advised the sailors to cast him into the sea, and then the storm ceased. A great fish swallowed him up, and he continued in the bowels of the fish three days and three nights after that time. At his repentance and earnest prayer, God commanded the fish to vomit out Jonah upon the dry land.

After this great deliverance God sent Jonah the second time to Nineveh, to preach destruction against it within forty days. The king and the people put on sackcloth, mourned for their sins, turned from their evil ways, and cried mightily to God for mercy, whereupon God withheld the punishment which he threatened. Instead of rejoicing in this merciful dealing of God with Nineveh, Jonah resented it; for he feared he should be counted a false prophet, and in an angry temper desired God to take away his life, Jonah iv. To convince him of the unreasonableness of his anger, God made a gourd grow up in a night, which sheltered him from the heat of the sun, and he caused it to wither the next day; upon which Jonah murmured against God, and then God reproved the prophet that he should be so much concerned about a gourd, a senseless plant, which grew up in one night, and only afforded him some conveniency of life; and that he should be no more concerned about the lives of so great and populous a city, which, besides men and women, had above six-score thousand children in it.

THE HISTORY OF JEREMIAH.

Jeremiah was one of the priests in the land of Benjamin, whom God called to be a prophet, when he was very young. This occurred in the days of Josiah king of Judah. For his encouragement in his trying work (which was to pronounce the judgments of God *against* the people), God put forth his hand

touched his mouth to signify his divine inspiration, and promised his presence with him to deliver him from all that should oppose him. The chief message with which Jeremiah was sent to the people was, that Jerusalem should be destroyed, and the people and princes should be carried away captive into Babylon, because of their sins, and remain there seventy years. The methods employed by Jeremiah to set before the people their sins, and these impending judgments of God, were various.

On some occasions he instructed them by very plain and direct speeches; he contrasted their disobedience with the scrupulous obedience of the Rechabites who, as a family, abstained from wine, which is no unlawful liquor, merely because Jonadab their father forbade them; much more should the Jews have abstained from those practices which are utterly unlawful, when the God of Israel had forbidden them; and he used some striking parables or emblems to represent the approaching calamities of the Jews. Among these were *a linen girdle* which Jeremiah was commanded to hide in the hole of a rock near the river Euphrates, and when he sought it again, it was quite spoiled; so God decreed to spoil the pride of Jerusalem by the nation that dwelt near Euphrates, that is, Assyria;—*a potter's vessel* representing that, as when the vessel of clay was spoiled in the making, the form of it was changed, and it was moulded up into another vessel, as the potter pleased; so God declared his power over the house of Israel, to manage and dispose of them as he pleased; and that he would change his providence

and their state, according to their behaviour;—by *an earthen bottle* which Jeremiah was commanded to break in the sight of the priests and the elders, and to declare, "Thus saith the Lord, even so will I break this people and this city, that it shall not be made whole again;"—by *bonds and yokes*, which in the days of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, God commanded Jeremiah to make and put on his own neck; and then to send them to the kings of the nations round about, to assure them that they should all be made subject to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon.

Jeremiah's chief enemies were the priests and the false prophets, who would have put him to death, in the reign of Jehoiakim; but the princes and the people saved him from death, though the king slew Urijah the prophet, who confirmed the words of Jeremiah. Pashur the priest, enraged at the fidelity of Jeremiah, smote the prophet, and put him in the stocks. On this account, God changed the name of Pashur to Magor-missabib, to denote that he should be a terror to himself and to all his friends; and foretold that he should be led captive to Babylon, and die there. Under the many injuries which Jeremiah received, in the main he continued to trust in God, but once he murmured against God, refused to prophesy, and cursed the day of his birth. His murmuring and his disobedience however were overcome, for the word of the Lord was in his heart like a burning fire shut up in his bones, and he could not forbear speaking. When Jeremiah could not appear in public himself, *being shut up* in prison, he commanded Baruch the

scribe to write the words of his prophecies from his mouth, in a volume of a book, and to read them in the ears of the people in the temple on a fast-day. When Jehoiakim the king heard of it he sent for the volume, read a little of it, cut it with a pen-knife, and burnt it in the fire, and then sent to seize Jeremiah and Baruch: but God by his kind providence kept them hid from the king. The next message from God to Jeremiah was, that he should take another volume, and that Baruch should write over again from his mouth the same words, and many others of the same import.

Concerning Jehoahaz (or Shallum), the son of Josiah king of Judah, Jeremiah predicted that he should die a captive in the land of Egypt, and that Jehoiakim his brother should die unlamented, and be buried like an ass, drawn and cast out beyond the gates of Jerusalem. Concerning Jehoiachin, who is also called Jechoniah and Coniah, the prophet declared that he should die in a strange land, and none of his seed should sit on the throne of Judah; he accordingly was carried to Babylon, and lived long there, and there he died. The advice Jeremiah gave to Zedekiah king of Judah was, that he should submit willingly to the yoke of the king of Babylon, that both he and his people might meet with better treatment. The false prophet Hananiah opposed Jeremiah, he took the yoke from the prophet Jeremiah's neck, which probably he had worn for some years, and as he brake it, he declared, the Lord would break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar in two years from the necks of the nations. But Jeremiah answered him

that God had appointed yokes of iron instead of yokes of wood, for all the nations to serve the king of Babylon; and that Hananiah should die in that year for his falsehood; which came to pass in two months after. Among all these predictions of distress, Jeremiah foretold the return of the Jews to their own land with joy, after seventy years' captivity; and he encouraged their faith and hope by many gracious promises of the Messiah who was to come.

When Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, Jeremiah shut up Zedekiah the king in the court of the prison which was in the king's house, because he foretold that Jerusalem should be taken, and that the king should not escape, but be carried to Babylon. While Jeremiah was in prison in order to assure them that the Jews should return from captivity, and possess the cities of Judah again, by express order from God, he bought a field of his cousin Hanameel, paid him the money, subscribed the evidence, and sealed it before witnesses, as an emblem and pledge of what should be done in Jerusalem hereafter.

When Jeremiah was at liberty, he endeavoured to flee out of Jerusalem, but was seized by the guard upon suspicion of retiring to the Chaldeans, and was thrust down into a dungeon by the princes, because he prophesied the destruction of the city; but when he sunk in the mire, Ebedmelech the Ethiopian, a servant in the king's house, drew him up with ropes by leave from the king; and he remained in the court of the prison till the *city was taken*. On this account, God assured

Ebedmelech that he should not die by the sword but his life should be given him, because he trusted in the Lord. After this Zedekiah the king sent for Jeremiah and asked what message he had from God. Jeremiah repeated his advice to the king of Judah, to go forth and submit to the king of Babylon, in order to save himself and the city, but he did not obey the prophet; so the city was taken and burnt, the princes of Judah were slain, and the king's sons were put to death before his eyes: then the king had his eyes put out, and he was carried in chains to Babylon, and died there. Then was fulfilled the prophecy of Ezekiel concerning Zedekiah, chap. xii. 13. "I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans; yet shall he not see it, though he shall die there."

After the city was taken, Nebuchadnezzar gave orders to the officers of his army to take care of Jeremiah; and give him his liberty to go where he pleased. He chose to continue in the land of Israel, and put himself under the protection of Gedaliah, whom the king of Babylon made governor in the land; but Gedaliah was quickly slain by a faction raised by Ishmael; and Ishmael also was put to flight by another faction under the command of Johanan, who carried Jeremiah and a multitude of the people into Egypt, in direct opposition to the advice which Jeremiah gave him from the Lord. In the land of Egypt, Jeremiah severely reproved the Jews for their idolatry there; he denounced ruin upon them, he took great stones and hid them in the clay at the entrance of Pharaoh king of Egypt's palace, and foretold that Nebu-

chadnezzar should conquer Egypt, and should set his throne upon those stones. Among the several prophecies against the surrounding nations, Jeremiah pronounced the severe judgments of God against Babylon, that had plundered Jerusalem, in a notable and dreadful manner, as Isaiah did before him; all which were eminently fulfilled, partly when Cyrus the Persian took the city of Babylon, and partly in following times. As an emblem or pledge of the accomplishment of the prophecy, Jeremiah wrote in a book all these threatenings, and bade Seraiah, one of the Jewish captives, read it when he came to Babylon, then bind a stone to it, and cast it into the river Euphrates, and say, "Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall never rise again."

THE HISTORY OF DANIEL.

Daniel was a young man of the tribe of Judah, who was carried captive by Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, in the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah. In Babylon, Daniel and his companions, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, were appointed to be nourished by the king's provision, and to be trained up in the learning of the Chaldeans, that in three years' time they might stand before the king; but they chose to be fed with pulse and water, rather than defile themselves with the king's meat, which was prepared after the manner of heathens. On this slender food their countenances appeared fairer, and their aspect was *better* approved by Melzar, who took care of

them, than the rest who fed on royal dainties, and when they were called before the king, he found them far wiser and better than all the astrologers and magicians in his kingdom. The first special occasion of Daniel's advancement at court was this:—Nebuchadnezzar dreamed a dream which much troubled him, yet he forgot it in the morning; and sent orders to destroy all the wise men and astrologers, because they could not tell him both the dream and the interpretation thereof.

On hearing of this decree, Daniel and his three companions, Shadrach Meshach, and Abednego, engaged themselves in prayer to the God of heaven, that he would reveal this secret to them, that they might not all perish together with the astrologers, whom the king had doomed to death. Daniel, in answer to this prayer, was informed of the dream, and rehearsed it before the king. There appeared a bright and terrible image, whose head was gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and thighs of brass, his legs of iron, and his feet part of iron and part of clay, which was dashed to pieces by a stone, and the stone became a mountain, and filled the whole earth. This dream signified the four great monarchies of the world, namely, the Assyrian, the Persian, the Grecian, and the Roman, which should destroy one another in succession; and the last of them should be destroyed by the kingdom of Christ, which should spread through the earth and remain for ever. On this occasion, Nebuchadnezzar acknowledged the supremacy of the God of Daniel; he made Daniel ruler over

Babylon, and at his request made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, officers under him.

Some time afterwards the three Jews, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, notwithstanding the honour the king had given them, were cast into a fiery furnace, because they would not worship a huge golden image which king Nebuchadnezzar had set up. The king being enraged at them for refusing boldly to worship this image, commanded the furnace to be made seven times hotter, even to such a degree, that the flames slew the men that cast them into it; but though these three men were cast into the furnace bound, and fell down in the fire, yet presently afterward the king saw four men loose walking in the fire, and they had no hurt; and the form of the fourth was like the Son of God, that is, some glorious person whom Nebuchadnezzar could not better describe than as a heavenly being, a Son of God. Upon this the king called them to come out of the furnace, and blessed their God who had sent his angel to deliver them, and made a decree, that no man should speak against the God of the Jews.

Daniel afterwards interpreted another dream of Nebuchadnezzar, namely, of a tall and spreading tree that was cut down, and the stump of it was left in the earth, and that it should have a beast's heart given it instead of a man's for seven years. The interpretation of which was, that Nebuchadnezzar the king should be driven from his kingdom, should run mad, and dwell seven years with the beasts of the earth, and then be

restored to his reason and his kingdom again. Accordingly, at the end of twelve months he was walking in the palace of Babylon, and boasting of his grandeur and majesty, and there fell a voice from heaven, that his kingdom was departed, and he should be driven from men: and immediately he was seized with madness, and the sentence was executed upon him, and he fled from the society of men, and herded with the beasts in the open field. At seven years' end, Nebuchadnezzar's understanding and his kingdom were restored to him. He then did further honours to the God of heaven, and published this history of himself, and these signs and wonders of the great God, throughout all his dominions.

In the time of Belshazzar, the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel was sent for to court to read and interpret three or four words which were written upon the wall by the apparition of a hand while Belshazzar was feasting. The circumstances in Belshazzar's feast that eminently provoked God against him were these; he and his nobles drank in the holy vessels that were taken out of the temple of God at Jerusalem, and at the same time they praised their gods of gold and silver, of wood and stone. This writing against the wall signified, that God had finished Belshazzar's kingdom, and given it to the Medes and Persians. Daniel, by whom it had been interpreted, was immediately clothed in scarlet, with a chain of gold, and made the third ruler in the kingdom, and Belshazzar was slain that very night by the army, under the command of Cyrus the

general, who after a long seige took the city
Babylon, and the kingdom was translated to Dari
the Mede, the king of the Medes and Persian
Daniel did not lose his preferment by the chan
of the kingdom; for Darius set him over all t
hundred and twenty princes, and made him first
the three presidents. The envy of the presiden
and the princes was excited on this occasion, a
they devised a plot to effect the ruin of Danie
knowing that he would pray to his God, they pe
suaded king Darius to sign a decree, that if any m
should ask a petition of any god or man for thir
days, except of the king himself, he should be ca
into the lions's den. When Daniel heard of th
decree, he went to his house, and the windo
being open toward Jerusalem, he prayed to h
God three times a day, according to his custo
In consequence of this, though the king hims
was sorry for his decree, and tried all means
save Daniel, yet his enemies prevailed to have hi
cast into the den of lions, because the laws of t
Medes and Persians were not to be altered. T
king was greatly concerned for Daniel; he pass
the night without music or sleep, and he went
the lion's den early in the morning, and fou
Daniel safe to his great joy; for God had shut t
mouths of the lions, that they did him no hurt.

King Darius then manifested his resentme
against the enemies of Daniel, by casting the
with their wives and children, into the den
lions, who brake all their bones immediately; a
he sent a decree through all nations, that m
should fear the God of Daniel. Daniel had sever

significant visions, or emblems and representations, of the four monarchies of the world, and of the kingdom of Christ. He also delivered predictions concerning future events among the Jews, and other nations of the earth; some of which are expressed so plainly, that the enemies of the Bible affect to suppose them to have been written after those events came to pass.

In answer to an excellent prayer of David for the restoration of the Jews, the angel Gabriel was ordered to fly swiftly, and to inform him of his own acceptance with God; of the commandment of the kings of Persia to rebuild the holy city; of the time of the coming, and the death of the Messiah to take away the sins of men; and of the second destruction of Jerusalem. Besides the various events relating to this world, he also received in his converse with angels, some predictions concerning the christian church and its troubles, and the period of them; concerning the resurrection of the dead, everlasting life, and everlasting punishment.

THE HISTORY OF ESTHER.

Esther was a beautiful young Jewish virgin, whose ancestors were carried away captive by the king of Babylon, in the days of Jeconiah, king of Judah. She was brought up in Shushan, the palace of the king of Persia, by Mordecai, her first cousin, for her father and mother were dead.

King* Ahasuerus took her into his royal house, and made her queen, in the room of his former queen, Vashti, who had been degraded in consequence of her refusal to come at his command, to grace a most magnificent festival.

Mordecai, the relative of Esther, rendered a most important service by giving information against two of the chamberlains, who had conspired against the king, upon which they were tried and hanged. A little after this time, Haman, of the seed of Agag the Amalekite, became the king's chief favourite. He was exceedingly enraged against Mordecai, because he refused to bow before him, and to do reverence to him, as the king's servants did at court; and he attempted to revenge himself by persuading the king to send orders to destroy all the Jews that were in all his dominions. On this occasion, Mordecai desired Esther, the queen, to venture into the king's presence, though she were not called, in order to petition the king for the lives of her people the Jews. Esther knew it was death by the law to venture into the king's presence, unless he held out his golden sceptre to her; yet having first fasted and prayed to God three days, and appointed the Jews in Shushan to fast and pray, she ventured to approach the king, and he held out his golden sceptre to her, and

* Most probably Artaxerxes II. king of Persia, called Longimanus; and who perhaps, being influenced by Esther and Mordecai, gave a decree for Ezra to promote the building of the temple of Jerusalem, after the *captivity in* Babylon.

promised to grant her request even to the half of his kingdom. Esther's first request was, that the king and Haman would come to a banquet which the queen had prepared for them: which request also she repeated the next day.

Haman rejoiced at the invitation that Esther gave him, and set up a gallows for Mordecai, fifty cubits high, expecting that at his desire the king would order Mordecai to be hanged thereon. On that night the king could not sleep, and he had the book of records read to entertain him, wherein was written Mordecai's information of the conspiracy against the king. When he inquired and found that Mordecai had received no recompense for his faithfulness, he ordered Haman to array him in royal apparel, to set him on the king's own horse, and do the highest honours to him in a public procession through the city. Haman received this order from the king, at that very time when he was come to court to speak to the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows he had set up. The same day, when the king and Haman were come to the banquet, queen Esther further requested, that the nation of the Jews, which were her kindred, might be delivered from the general massacre that Haman had contrived for them. On this, the king commanded Haman to be hanged on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai: he put Mordecai in Haman's place at court, and sent orders throughout his dominions for the Jews to defend themselves.

According to the laws of the Medes and Persians, the order for the slaughter of the Jews could not

be reversed, because it was written in the king's name, and sealed with his ring: and God ordered it thus in his providence, for the public destruction of their enemies. On the day designed for the general slaughter, the Jews slew seventy-five thousand of those that rose up against them, and the ten sons of Haman among the rest. As a memorial of this great deliverance, all the Jews agreed, by and with the authority of Esther and Mordecai, to keep the 14th and 15th day of the month Adar every year, as a day of thanksgiving for this salvation; and these two days were called the days of Purim, from Pur, which signifies a Lot: because Haman had cast lots in a superstitious manner, to find out what month or day was the most lucky to execute his bloody device against the Jews.

This history evidently appears to be a true account of things, though there is not the least hint who was the writer of it, nor is the name of God in it; because it is delivered down to us among the sacred writings by the Jews themselves, who "were the keepers of the oracles of God," Rom. iii. 2.; and because this feast of Purim is observed by the Jews to this day, in memory of this deliverance.

HISTORY

OF THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

THE New Testament is chiefly taken up with e history of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Saviour mankind, John the Baptist, who was his fore-nner; and the apostles, who were his followers. he two former are contained in the four Gospels, e latter in the Acts, with some occasional hints om the Epistles.

OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

As the Old Testament begins with the creation the world, so the first question here is, Who as the Saviour of the world?

A. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who was sent wn to dwell among men, in order to become eir Saviour. Early notice had been given of his ming; God himself, and his prophets, throughout l ages, having foretold his coming as some great eliverer, as the Messiah, or Anointed of God. here were also many plain marks or characters ven of him whereby he might be known, and he as answered them all, in his life, his doctrine, his eath, and his resurrection. Such a Messiah was lly expected by the Jews, to whom the books of

the Old Testament were given, and particularly in that age* wherein he came. The forerunner or messenger sent to declare that the Messiah was just at hand, was John the Baptist, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth. Zacharias was a good man, and a priest, who lived without a child till his wife and he were both grown old. At length the angel Gabriel appeared to him while he was offering incense in the temple, and the people were praying without, and told him that he should have a son, and should call his name John. As a sign of the truth of his message, the angel declared that Zacharias should be dumb, and not able to speak till John was born.

During the pregnancy of Elizabeth, the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, made a visit to her, and they both rejoiced and praised God together in a divine rapture. When Elizabeth had brought forth a son, and they were about to circumcise the child, Zacharias wrote, "His name is *John*," on a table, and then his tongue was loosed, and he spake the praises of God. John was brought up in the desert country or wilderness of Judæa, and there also he began his public ministry when he was about thirty years of age. His chief commission from God was to preach the doctrine of repentance and forgiveness of sins; to baptize with water those who professed their repentance, and to direct the people to

* It is worth our observation, that not only the Jews and Samaritans, but the Heathens also, about this *time*, expected some great king or glorious person to be *born*.

Christ as the Saviour. He farther instructed the people not to trust in their being the children of Abraham; he taught them lessons of love and liberality; to give food and clothing to those who wanted: and he gave special directions to the Pharisees and Sadducees, to the publicans, and the soldiers who came to be baptized, according to their peculiar circumstances. The Pharisees and Sadducees he told to "bring forth fruits" in their lives, to make their repentance appear, as well as profess it with their lips. The publicans or tax-gatherers he charged to exact or demand no more money of the people than what was appointed; and his counsel to the soldiers was to do violence or injury to none, to accuse no person falsely, and to be content with their pay. Concerning himself he said that he was not the Christ, nor the very prophet Elias risen from the dead; but that he was only come "as a voice in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord," according to the prophecy of Isaiah. Jesus Christ himself indeed says that John was Elias, or Elijah, because he came in the spirit and power of Elias, to prepare the way for Christ, according to the sense of the prophet Malachi. He imitated or resembled Elias, or Elijah, in that he wore a garment of hair; that he lived an austere life, like Elijah, in the wilderness; that he came to begin a reformation among the Jews, as Elias did, when they were greatly corrupted; and he reproved Herod, as Elias reproved Ahab. Concerning Jesus Christ he declared that though Jesus came after him, yet he was not worthy to bear his shoes; that he only baptized

with water, but Jesus would baptize "with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" and he pointed him out in the midst of the people, saying "This is the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world."

John was made acquainted with Jesus Christ by some notice given him privately from God, and he had a further public sign from heaven to confirm his knowledge of him; for when Jesus was baptized by John in the river Jordan, "the Holy Ghost came down like a dove, and rested upon him," as God had foretold him. The disciples of John did not immediately leave him, and follow Jesus, for Jesus had not then begun his public ministry; but some time after John sent them to see the miracles that Jesus wrought, that they might be convinced that he was the Messiah. John the Baptist was at last cast into prison by Herod, because he reproved him for taking Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. Herod had before that heard John preach, and reformed some of his evil practices upon it; and yet he was persuaded to put him to death at last, to satisfy the malice and revenge of this wicked woman. This came to pass upon Herod's birth-day, when the daughter of Herodias pleased the king so well with her dancing, that he promised to give her whatever she asked; and her mother bade her ask for John the Baptist's head in a dish. Herod complied with this bloody request, for he had sworn to it before a great deal of company; and rather than *break* his rash and sinful oath, he would kill a *prophet of* God, John the Baptist. The disciples

of John the Baptist took up his body and buried it. They then went and told Jesus what had befallen their master, and most probably became the disciples of Jesus.

OF THE BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD OF JESUS CHRIST.

The Son of God, who came into this world to be the Saviour of men, received a significant name, *Jesus* (which is his proper name), signifying a Saviour; and Christ is the same in Greek that Messiah is in Hebrew, which implies his being anointed, or appointed to that office. This glorious person dwelt with God his Father in a very exalted state before this world was made; but he laid aside his glory, he took a body of flesh and blood, which God had prepared for him, and was born of Mary, who was a virgin, according to the prophecy of Isaiah.

Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, was a poor young woman of the family of David, who was espoused to, or had consented to marry, Joseph, a carpenter, who was also of the house of David, that royal family having then fallen into decay. Joseph afterwards married her, notwithstanding; being admonished by an angel of God to do so without fear, because the child that was formed in her was by the Spirit of God. The first notice which Mary received of the honour designed to her was this:—the angel Gabriel was sent to her at Nazareth, where she dwelt, to assure her, that "the power of the most high God should over-

shadow her," and that she should bring forth a child who should be called the Son of God. Mary was further encouraged in this hope by the circumstances that occurred. When she went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who was then with child with John the Baptist, Elizabeth saluted her as the mother of the Messiah, and they were both inspired to praise the Lord with divine raptures.

Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem, the city of David, according to the prophecy of Micah. Augustus Cæsar, the emperor, having decreed to tax or register all the world, Joseph being of the house of David, went up with Mary, his espoused wife, to be registered or taxed in Bethlehem, the city of David. A poor provision indeed was made for her there: there was no room for them in the inn; she was lodged in a stable, and when she brought forth her son, she laid him in a manger. Special notices, however, were given that this child was the Messiah, or Christ the king of Israel, by angels and men, by Jews and Gentiles. Immediately on his birth an angel appeared to some shepherds by night, and sent them to find the babe in a manger at Bethlehem; and a multitude of the heavenly host praised God, saying, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill towards men:" and this the shepherds heard.

When the child Jesus was brought to the temple to be circumcised, and presented to the Lord as the first-born, Simeon and Anna, two ancient persons among the Jews, bore witness to him. It was revealed to Simeon that he should not die *before he had* seen the Messiah; and he took

Jesus up in his arms, and said, "Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." Anna was an aged widow and a prophetess, and she gave thanks to the Lord concerning him, and spake of him to all that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. The Gentiles also received notice of the birth of Christ, for some wise men in the east had seen a new star, and had some divine notice that a king of the Jews was born, and they came to worship him. The star went before them, and stood over the place where the infant lay, and they fell down and worshipped him, and presented him gold and spices. But Herod the Great, who then reigned in Judæa, having heard from the wise men that a king of the Jews was born, was filled with jealousy, and thinking to destroy Jesus, he slew all the children that were in or near Bethlehem, under two years old. The child Jesus escaped this danger, Joseph, his supposed father, being warned by an angel to "take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt."

When Herod was dead, God sent a message by an angel, in a dream, to command Joseph and Mary to return with him; so they returned into Galilee, and dwelt in Nazareth, their city. When Jesus was twelve years old, he went up with his parents to the passover, according to their custom, but when they returned they missed their son, and turned back to Jerusalem, where "after three days they found him in the temple, in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions." As a reason for his conduct, Jesus

told them, that they might have supposed "he was about his Father's business:" but he went down with them to Nazareth, where he spent the rest of his childhood, and was subject to his parents. It is reported by the ancients, that he was brought up to his father's trade, who was a country carpenter, and that he made ploughs and yokes for oxen; for Jesus himself is called a carpenter.

OF THE PUBLIC LIFE AND MINISTRY OF CHRIST.

His Preparation for his public Work.

At about thirty years of age, Jesus began to appear in public, being eminently prepared for his public work by his baptism, by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon him, by his retirement, and his temptations. When John the Baptist was sent with a commission to baptize men, Jesus offered himself at the river Jordan to be baptized, that he might "fulfil all righteousness," though he had no need to be washed from sin. On this occasion John declared that Jesus was "the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the whole world;" and that he himself, who baptized with water, was not worthy to loose the shoes of Jesus, because he was appointed to baptize with "the Holy Spirit, and with fire." When "Jesus came out of the water, the Spirit of God like a dove descended *upon* him, and a voice from heaven was heard *saying*, *This* is my beloved Son, in whom I am

well pleased." After Jesus was baptized, he was led into the wilderness, not only to endure temptation, and conquer the tempter there, but probably to spend forty days in meditation and prayer, and converse with God; as Moses, before his giving the laws to Israel, spent forty days with God on Mount Sinai. There the Devil assaulted him with three powerful temptations: first, he persuaded him to turn stones into bread, because he was an hungered, having fasted forty days; but Christ answered him by showing, that "man doth not live by bread alone, but by the power and blessing of God." The second temptation was this; the Devil set him upon a pinnacle of the temple, and bade him cast himself down, for there was a promise, in Psalm xci. 11, that "angels should bear him up," so that he should receive no hurt. Jesus resisted that temptation, by showing that we must not tempt the providence of God any way, (Deut. vi. 16.) and therefore we must not venture upon dangers without necessity. As a third temptation, the Devil promised to give him all the kingdoms of the world, if Jesus would fall down and worship him. This temptation was vanquished, by declaring that God only was to be worshipped. It should be observed, that Jesus derived his answers to these several temptations, from several texts of scripture which he cited upon this occasion, and all out of the book of Deuteronomy When the Devil was disappointed and vanquished, and forsook Jesus, "the angels of God came and ministered unto him."

JESUS CHRIST'S APPEARANCE WITH THE CHARACTERS OF THE MESSIAH.

Q. We are now come to the public life and ministry of Jesus Christ; let us hear what were the chief parts or designs of it.

A. The first design of his public life and ministry was, to appear in the world with the marks of a divine commission, and the characters of the Messiah upon him. In fulfilment of this first design of his public life and ministry, he healed the sick, he raised the dead, he preached the glad tidings of salvation to the poor, he set about the reformation of the world, and all this without noise or uproar; and he received several testimonies from heaven. Jesus, indeed, several times preached that he was "sent from God," yet he very seldom declared plainly that he was the Messiah; and even forbid the men who knew it to publish it at the time; nor would he suffer the devils to declare it: this was partly that men might learn his office and character in a rational way, and infer that he was the Messiah by his doctrine and his works; and partly that he might not expose himself to the rage of his enemies, and to death before his time.

Some of the testimonies which Christ received from heaven in his life, were these:—Voices from heaven at several times; once at his baptism, which was mentioned before; once among the people. When Christ prayed in public that God *his Father* would glorify his name, there was an

answer came from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again," John xii. 28; and once at the transfiguration, when Jesus went up into a high mountain with three of his disciples, his countenance was changed all glorious, and his raiment shining like sun-beams; Moses and Elias appeared and conversed with him, and from a bright cloud broke forth a voice, "This is my beloved Son, hear ye him."

OF THE SUBJECTS OF HIS PREACHING, HIS PARABLES, AND HIS DISPUTES.

Q. What was the second part and design of Christ's public life and ministry?

A. To preach and teach many necessary truths and duties to the people. In this part of his work Jesus spake several things to them in public sermons or discourses, others in free conversation or dispute: sometimes he spake in plain language, at other times by way of parable or similitude. The chief subjects of our Saviour's public preaching were these:—

1. He explained the law of God in its full latitude, as it reaches the thoughts, as well as words and actions, and rescued it from the grievous corruptions, the false glosses and mistakes of the Jewish teachers; and by this means he convinced his hearers of sin, and showed them the need of a Saviour.

2. He taught them the vanity of depending upon any outward privileges, as being the children of Abraham; he shewed them the danger of

putting ceremonies and forms of any kind in the room of real and practical godliness; he severely reproved the Scribes and Pharisees on this account; and assured them there was no salvation for them, no entrance into heaven, without being born again, or becoming new creatures.

3. He corrected several sinful customs and practices, with other foolish traditions among the people; and reproved the teachers of the law for mingling their traditions and the inventions of men with the pure appointments of God.

4. He called the people aloud to repentance of every sin, because the kingdom of the Gospel was at hand.

5. He gave particular directions for the practice of many duties, namely, spiritual worship, prayer, dependence upon God, hearing the word, giving alms, loving our neighbours, forgiving our enemies, &c.

6. He preached the Gospel, or the glad tidings of pardoning grace, to sinners who repent of their sins, and believe in him; he promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit to them that ask it of God; he represented himself as sent of God, and invited all men to come to him, and trust in him, that they might be saved.

7. He revealed the things of the future and invisible world, the resurrection and the day of judgment, heaven and hell, beyond what the world had ever known before.

8. He often foretold that the Jews would reject him and his Gospel, and should be terribly punished *for it; and he* declared that the Gentiles would

receive his Gospel; and said many things to prepare the way of the Gentiles into the church or kingdom of the Messiah, because the Jews had such violent prejudices against their admission into it.

9. He several times foretold his own death, his resurrection, and his future glory, and his coming to raise the dead, and to judge the world.

What Jesus spake by way of prophecy, in private to his disciples, he spake plainly; but what he spake of this kind in public to the multitude, was often (though not always) delivered in parables and similitudes. As to the great and glorious doctrine of his own death as a sacrifice or ransom for sinful men, Jesus taught this privately to his disciples, to whom he spoke more freely of his death and resurrection, toward the end of his life. But, as for wise reasons he did not preach publicly and plainly to the people of his own death, or his resurrection, so he scarcely ever preached in public and in plain language those great doctrines of Christianity that depend upon his death, or his resurrection; these things were wisely reserved for the ministry of his apostles, after he was actually dead and risen, and ascended to heaven, and had poured out on them the promised Spirit.

Some of the most remarkable among the parables of Jesus Christ were these:—

(1.) The parable of the sower and the seed.—As the seed that is sown, falling on different sorts of ground, brings forth more or less fruit, or no fruit at all; so when ministers preach the Gospel, the word becomes more or less fruitful,

or unfruitful, according to the good or evil hearts the hearers, Matt. xiii. 1—23.

(2.) Of the tares in the field.—As the enemy had sowed tares where the husbandman had sowed wheat, and they were both suffered to grow together till the harvest, then the wheat was gathered into the barn, and the tares were burnt; so the devil mingles his children with the children of God in this world; but at the day of judgment they shall be separated; the children of the devil shall be cast into a furnace of fire, and the children of God shall shine in the kingdom of their Father, Matt. xiii. 24—30.

(3.) That of the merciless servant, who, though his Lord forgave him ten thousand talents, dealt cruelly with his fellow-servant who owed him but a hundred pence, and cast him into prison till he should pay it. When the Lord heard of it, he reproved and imprisoned him till the payment of his debt: and thus the great God, who is ready to forgive us our innumerable sins, will deal with us, if we forgive not our brethren their offences against us, Matt. xviii. 21—35.

(4.) The parable of the good Samaritan.—When a Jew was abused and stripped, and wounded by robbers, and left helpless, a Priest and a Levite passed by and neglected him, but a Samaritan took care of him, and carried him to an inn for his recovery. This Jesus spake to show that the Samaritan treated the Jew as a neighbour ought to do, and that no differences of opinion should

hinder us from actions of common humanity towards other men, Luke x. 30—37.

(5.) The labourers in the vineyard.—The labourers who were called at the eleventh hour, through the great goodness of the master, received the same reward as those who were called in at the first hour; even so the Gentiles should be called into the church in the latter days, and enjoy equal privileges with the Jews, who had been called many ages before them, Matt. xx. 1—16.

(6.) Of the wicked husbandmen.—The owner of a vineyard let it out to husbandmen, and going into a far country, first sent his servants, and at last his son, to receive the fruits; but they beat and slew both the servants and the son. Upon which, at the return of the owner, these husbandmen were destroyed, and the vineyard let out to others; by which our Saviour designed to show how the Jews brought no fruit to God, notwithstanding all their advantages; that they abused his prophets, and would slay his Son; that God would turn them out of his church, and give his Gospel to the Gentiles, Matt. xxi. 33—43.

(7.) Of the ten virgins.—Some of these virgins were wise, and some were foolish; but they all slept while the bridegroom tarried, and at midnight when the bridegroom came, even the wise were something unprepared, but the foolish were shut out from the wedding; whence our Saviour draws this advice; "Watch ye, for ye know not the day or hour when the Son of man cometh," Matt. xxv. 1—13.

(8.) Of the talents.—Those servants who

were entrusted with several talents, and had improved them, were rewarded in proportion to their improvement; but he who laid up his talent in a napkin, and made no improvement of it, was cast into outer darkness as an unprofitable servant. The plain design of this parable is, to show the necessity of diligence in the improvement of all our mercies and advantages, Matt. xxv. 14—30. Luke xix. 12—27.

(9.) The parable of the prodigal son.—The younger son of a family grew prodigal, and wasted his estate in rioting abroad, while the elder son lived at home and served his father; but upon the return of the prodigal, and his repentance, his father received him with much compassion and joy; at which his elder brother was angry. So shall the mercy of God be shown to the repenting Gentiles, when they shall forsake their sins and return to God, though the Jews will be envious, and quarrel with this conduct of Providence, Luke xv. 11—32.

(10.) The rich man and Lazarus.—The rich man, who spent his days in luxury, and was cruel to the poor, died, and went to hell; but Lazarus, a beggar, was religious, and went to heaven. The rich man in his torment would fain have Lazarus sent to warn his kindred of their danger; but Abraham tells him, "that if they will not hear Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded" to leave their sins, "though one rose from the dead," Luke xvi. 19—31.

There were many of these parables which the *hearers of* Christ did not understand; but when

they were retired from the multitude, Christ expounded the parable to his disciples, Mark iv. 9—12, 34. Besides these public sermons and parables, Jesus Christ had conversation and disputes with several sorts of persons. He had some discourses with the multitude and with his own disciples, which would be too long to repeat; and besides these, he had several particular discourses.

(1.) With Nicodemus, who came to him by night, and whom he taught that a man must be born again; that is, he must have his old sinful nature renewed into holiness, if he would see the kingdom of God: and that God sent his only begotten Son to save as many as would believe on him, John iii. 1—21.

(2.) With the woman of Samaria, whom he met with at Jacob's well.—He told her of her living in the sin of fornication; and assured her, the time was just at hand when God would not regard persons ever the more on account of the places in which they worshipped him, whether it were at the temple of Jerusalem or Samaria; but on account of the spiritual worship which they paid him from their hearts; and he let her know plainly that he was the Messiah, John iv. 7—26.

(3.) With the Herodians, who inquired of him, whether it was lawful to give tribute to Cæsar? that, if he denied it, they might accuse him to the Romans; if he asserted it, they might render him odious to the Jews, and particularly the Pharisees: but Jesus gave them a very wise answer, and avoided their snares, by bidding them to "render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and unto

God the things that are God's," Matt. xxii. 15—22.

(4.) With the Sadducees, who thought to ridicule him about the doctrine of the resurrection, by inquiring, to which of her seven husbands a wife would belong in that day? but as he proved the resurrection to them from the law of Moses, so he assured them that there was no such relation as marriage in that state, Matt. xxii. 23—33.

(5.) Jesus had many disputes with the Pharisees, and the Scribes, and the teachers of the law, about their excessive fondness for ceremonies and traditions, wherein he showed that they made void the law of God by their own invented traditions; and that the duties of morality, righteousness, and goodness, were more valuable even than the ceremonies of God's own appointment, and are to be preferred where they may happen to interfere: "for God will have mercy and not sacrifice," Matt. xv. 1—20. xxiii. and xii. 1—7.

(6.) With the ruler of the synagogue and other Jews—about his healing diseased persons on the sabbath-day, at which they cavilled; but he proved to them, that it was a very lawful thing; even from the care that God took of cattle on the sabbath-day in the law of Moses, Luke xiii. 14—17.

(7.) With the chief priests and elders of the people—about his own authority for preaching, wherein he silenced them, by inquiring of them, what authority had John the Baptist, whom all *the people* had esteemed as a prophet? Matt. xxi. *23—27.*

THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

Q. What was the third considerable design of Christ's public life and ministry?

A. To work miracles for the confirmation of his doctrine, and for the proof of his being sent from God to be the Saviour of the world. Some of the chief of the miracles which our Saviour wrought for this purpose are the following:—

1. He turned six vessels full of water into excellent wine, John ii. 7—11.

2. He fed five thousand persons at once with five loaves, and two small fishes; and again, he fed four thousand with seven loaves; and at both times there were several baskets of fragments, Matt. xiv. and xv.

3. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, strength and vigour to lame and withered limbs, Mark viii. John ix. Mark vii. Matt. xx. John v.

4. He healed the leprosy, the fever, the palsy, the dropsy, and other distempers, by a word of command, Matt. viii. and ix. Mark i. Luke xiv.

5. He walked on the water, and suppressed a storm at sea, by a rebuke given to the seas and winds, Matt. xiv. 25—32, and viii. 26.

6. He delivered several persons from the possession of the devil, by rebuking the evil spirits, and commanding them to depart, Luke iv. Matt. viii. Mark i.

7. He raised a few persons from the dead, namely, the ruler's daughter in the chamber; the

widow's son in the street, as he was carried to his burial; and Lazarus out of his grave when he had been dead four days, Mark v. Luke vii. John xi.

In these miracles of our Saviour, these four things are remarkable:—

1. That almost every wondrous work performed by Christ was a work of love and goodness; whereas many of the wonders of Moses were works of destruction.

2. His miracles were very numerous, so that mankind could not be mistaken in all of them, though they should object against some.

3. They were wrought in many places of the Jewish nation, and several of them before the eyes of the multitude, who could attest them.

4. They were such miracles as were foretold should be wrought in the days of the Messiah; and therefore he continually appealed to his miraculous works for a testimony of his commission from God, John x. 37, 38. xv. 24. and xiv. 11.

THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST.

Q. What was the fourth thing designed in the public life and ministry of Christ?

A. To give an example to the world of universal holiness and goodness, John xiii. 15. 1 Cor. xi. 1. Rom. xv. 5. Some of the more remarkable virtues, graces, or duties, wherein Christ appears to be our example, are these.

1. He sought the public glory of God with the

warmest zeal, and vindicated the honour of his Father's appointments against the corruptions of men, John viii. 50. xvii. 4. and ii. 15—17. Matt. xxiii.

2. He was strictly observant of all the commands of God, even the ceremonial as well as the moral: he observed the sabbath, he came up to the feast at Jerusalem, he desired to be baptized; he came to fulfil the law of God, and made it his meat and his drink, Matt. iii. 15. and v. 17. John xiv. 31. iv. 34. and vii. 10.

3. He was frequent and fervent in religious exercises, prayer, and praise, Luke vi. 12. and xi. 1, 2. Matt. xiv. 23. and xi. 25.

4. He was eminent for heavenly-mindedness, self-denial as to the comforts of this life, and trust in God for his daily bread; he was so poor, that the good women ministered to him out of their substance, and he had not where to lay his head, Luke ix. 58. and viii. 3.

5. He bore the sorrows from the hand of God with the highest submission, and the vilest injuries from men with perfect patience and meekness; not returning railing for railing, but blessing those that persecuted him, 1 Pet. ii. 21—23. Matt. xi. 29. Luke xxii. 42. and xxiii. 34.

6. He gave the most glorious instances of good-will to men, compassion to the miserable, and love to friends, strangers, and to enemies. He often had pity on the multitudes that followed him: he travelled about, and took all occasions to do good to the bodies and the souls of men: to their bodies, by his healing and feeding them; and to their

souls, by his preaching and conversation: and at last he laid down his life for sinners, Acts. x. 38. Matt. ix. 36. and xiv. 14. John xv. 13. Rom. v. 6, 8, 10.

7. He was obedient to his parents, paying them honour; and obedient to magistrates, paying tax and tribute, Luke ii. 51. Matt. xvii. 24.

8. He was humble and familiar with the poor, and even with publicans and sinners for their good, Matt. xi. 29. and ix. 11, 12. He washed the feet of his own disciples, John xiii. 14.

9. He was steadfast in resisting the temptations of the devil, and opposing the iniquities of men, Matt. iv. 1—11. Heb. ii. 18. and xii. 1, 2. Matt. xxiii. John ii. 13, &c.

10. He was prudent and watchful against the snares of his enemies, and careful to give them no just occasions against him: this appears in the wisdom of his discourses, and his daily conduct, John vii. 1. and xi. 54. Matt. xvii. 27.

HIS CALLING THE APOSTLES AND INSTRUCTING THEM.

Q. What was the fifth part of the business and design of Christ's public ministry?

A. To call his apostles, and instruct them in their great commission of preaching the Gospel. He first sent forth twelve, who were called apostles, whom he designed to make his chief ministers; and he afterwards sent seventy through the land *of* Israel on the same errand of preaching the *Gospel,* Matt. x. 1. Luke vi. 13. and x. 1. The

commission that Christ gave them all was to preach the Gospel, to heal the sick, and to cast out devils, Matt. x. 1—8. Luke x. 9, 17. The names of the twelve apostles were these:—Simon Peter, and Andrew his brother, who were fishermen; James, and John the son of Zebedee, who were also fishers; Philip and Bartholomew;* Thomas, and Matthew the Publican, who is also called Levi; James the son of Alpheus, who is called the Lord's brother; and Jude the brother of James, who is also called Lebbeus and Thaddeus; Simon the Canaanite, who is called Zelotes;† and Judas Iscariot, who afterwards betrayed his Master, Matt. x. 2—4. Luke vi. 14—16. Gal. i. 19. These messengers of Christ had some success in their work, for the seventy returned with joy, saying, "Lord even the devils are subject unto us through thy name," Luke x. 17.

Our Lord trained up his twelve apostles for their future service, by keeping them very frequently attending upon him, and dwelling much with him, before and after their first mission abroad; so that they enjoyed his private instructions, his prayers, and his example continually, Matt. x. 27. xiii. 51, 52. Luke xi. 1. Mark iv. 34.

More particularly, 1. He explained the parables

* Some suppose Bartholomew to be the same with Nathanael.

† Simon was not a Canaanite by nation, for the apostles were all Jews: some therefore think it is only the Hebrew or Syriac word Cana, which signifies a Zealot, with a Greek termination added.

to them at home, which he spake to the people, and acquainted them in private what they should preach in public, Matt. x. 27. Mark iv. 34.

2. He foretold them that they must expect difficulties and persecutions, but he promised the aids of his Spirit and his own presence with them, and a large reward in heaven, Matt. x. 16—33. and xxviii. 20.

3. He charged them to love all men, and particularly to love one another; and not to affect dominion and authority over one another—so particularly, as if he designed to preclude the popish error of St. Peter being made the prince of the apostles, John xiii. 34, 35. Matt. xx. 25, 26.

4. If any house welcomed and received them, they were ordered to pronounce the blessing of peace upon that house: but when any town refused to receive their message, they were commanded to shake off the dust of their feet as a testimony against them, Matt. x. 11—14. Luke x. 4—11.

5. He told them that he was the Messiah, and that he came to give his life a ransom for men; that he should be crucified and put to death at Jerusalem, and that he should rise again the third day, Matt. xvi. 16—22. and xx. 28.

6. He prayed with them often, and taught them how to pray, both in their younger and their more advanced state of knowledge, Luke xi. 1—13. John xvi. 23, 24.

7. He gave them many admirable discourses before his death; he foretold the destruction of

Jerusalem; and indulged their presence with him in his most excellent prayer to God just before his sufferings. See Matt. xxiv. John xiv.—xvii.

8. He ordered them after his death to tarry at Jerusalem till they should receive the promised Spirit to fit them for their further service, Luke xxiv. 49.

Among the twelve, Peter, James, and John were distinguished by the peculiar intimacy of their Master; for they were admitted to be present in the room when he raised the ruler's daughter; and in the holy mount, when he was transfigured; and in the garden when he sustained his agony; besides that John was called the beloved disciple, and leaned on Jesus's bosom at the holy supper, Mark v. 37. Matt. xvii. 1. and xxvi. 37. John xiii. 23.

HIS APPOINTMENT OR INSTITUTION OF THE TWO SACRAMENTS.

Q. What is the last part of the public ministry of Christ?

A. His appointment of the two sensible ordinances, which are called sacraments, namely, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper. It is supposed that he confirmed and practised the baptism of John in his life-time, that is, the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins; but doubtless with this constant requirement, that they should believe on him as a prophet sent from God. See Matt. iii. 11. Acts xix. 4. Matt. iv. 17. John iv. 1. and after his resurrection, just before his ascension

to heaven, he bade his disciples, "Go, teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19.

He appointed the Lord's supper the same night in which he was betrayed, which was just after the feast of the passover, and a few hours before his death, 1 Cor. xi. 23. In instituting this ordinance, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you:" and he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins:" then he said, "This do in remembrance of me:" and afterward he sung an hymn, Matt. xxvi. 26—30. 1 Cor. xi. 24—26. It has been generally supposed that baptism comes in the room of circumcision, and the Lord's supper in the room of the passover; but the proof of this does not belong to this place. Both these ordinances are to continue till the end of the world; for our Saviour upon giving his apostles and ministers commission to teach and baptize, promises to be with them "to the end of the world," Matt. xxviii. 20. And as to the Lord's supper, Jesus not only bade them do this in remembrance of him, but St. Paul saith, "Hereby ye show forth the Lord's death till he come;" that is, till Christ come to judge the world, 1 Cor. xi. 24—26.

REMARKABLE OCCURRENCES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

Q. What other remarkable occurrences are recorded in the life of Christ, besides those that have been mentioned.

A. These that follow, namely,

1. When Jesus Christ healed the servant of the centurion at Capernaum, he only sent a message of healing by his master, without going near him himself, to show that he had power over diseases at a distance, and could command them to depart, Matt. viii. 5—13.

2. When he cast many devils out of the man of Gadara, who lived among the tombs, the devils asked leave to enter into a herd of swine; and when Jesus permitted them, they drove the herd of swine down a steep place into the sea, and drowned them: upon which the people desired him to depart out of their coasts, Mark v. 1—17.

3. When Jesus healed the man sick of the palsy at Nazareth, his own city, he forgave his sins, and then cured his distemper, as a proof of his power to forgive sin, Matt. ix. 1—8.

4. When the woman came to be cured of her bleeding, with a strong belief of his power and mercy, she only touched the hem of his garment, and Jesus pronounced that "her faith had made her whole," Matt. ix. 20—22.

5. He went through a corn-field with his disciples on the sabbath, and defended them in their plucking of ears of corn, and rubbing, and eating,

from the accusation of the Pharisees, who pretended this was a breach of the sabbath, Matt. xii. 1—8.

6. When the Jews demanded a sign of him, he refused to give them any, but the sign of the prophet Jonah, that "as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so the Son of man should be three days and nights in the grave," Matt. xii. 38—41.

7. When he was told that his mother and his brethren stood without, and wanted to speak with him, he took occasion to say, "Whosoever should do the will of his Father were indeed his nearest relations, his brother, his sister, and his mother," Matt. xii. 46—50.

8. Though he wrought many miracles in his life, yet he wrought but few of them in his own country, because they despised him as the son of a carpenter, and would not believe in him, Matt. xiii. 54—58.

9. When Jesus walked upon the water towards his disciples in a storm, he called Peter out of the ship to walk upon the water too, and reproved him for his fearfulness and unbelief when he began to sink, Matt. xiv. 24—32.

10. He commended Peter for his confession of him as the Son of the living God, and promised to build his church upon this rock, for this confession of Peter: but presently after, he told his disciples of his sufferings and death, and reproved Peter severely for wishing that Christ might not suffer and die, Matt. xvi. 16—23.

11. When tribute money was required of him

at Capernaum, he sent Peter to catch a fish, and told him he should find money in the mouth of it, which he did, and paid it to those who gathered the tax, Matt. xvii. 24—27.

12. When little children were brought to him that he should touch them, his disciples rebuked those that brought them; but Jesus "took them up in his arms, and blessed them, and said, Of such is the kingdom of God," Mark x. 13—16.

13. When a rich young man inquired of him, "what he should do to obtain eternal life," he tried him by saying, "Keep the commandments," or "do this and live; for the man that doth them shall live by them;" as Rom. x. 5. But when the young man was so confident of his own righteousness, and so little sensible of his imperfections, as to reply, "All these I have kept from my youth: what do I lack more?" our Lord then put him to a further trial, bade him sell what estate he had, give to the poor, and follow him as one of his disciples. At this "the young man went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions:" whence Jesus took occasion to say, "It is hard for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven," Matt. xix. 16—24.

14. When James and John desired to be made chief in his kingdom, and to sit on his right hand and on his left, Jesus took occasion to suppress ambition amongst all his disciples, and said, "Whoever will be chief amongst you, let him be your servant; as the Son of man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many," Matt. xx. 20—28.

15. As he was travelling from Galilee to Jerusalem, Samaria lay in his way: and when the Samaritans would not receive him, some of his disciples would have "called for fire from heaven upon them, as Elias did:" but he severely reproved them, saying, they "knew not what manner of spirit they were of; for the Son of man came to save men's lives, and not to destroy them," Luke ix. 51—56.

16. When our Saviour was entertained at Bethany, he gently reproved Martha for being too much cumbered with care to entertain and feast him, and commended her sister Mary, who sat at his feet, and heard his words: "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her," Luke x. 38—42.

17. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, he went to the grave in company with Martha and Mary, his two sisters, and several Jews: he bade them take away the stone from the mouth of the cave, and prayed to his Father, and then commanded Lazarus to come forth, who had been dead four days; and Lazarus obeyed him, and came forth, John xi.

18. The Jews used to travel on foot from place to place, yet when he went up to the last feast at Jerusalem, he rode into the city upon the colt of an ass, that the prophecy of Zechariah might be fulfilled, Zech. ix. 9. and a great multitude attended him as in triumph, crying "Hosannah to the Son of David;" so that the children learnt the song, and repeated it in the temple, Matt. *xxi. 1—9.*

19. When he found in the temple those that sold oxen, and sheep, and doves, and the changers of money, he made a scourge of small cords, and drove them all out of the temple, and overthrew the tables, with the money on them; and said, "It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves." And he went out of the city, and lodged that night at Bethany, Matt. xxi. 12, 13, 17.

20. When he returned from Bethany, the next morning, he cursed a fig-tree that had only leaves and no fruit on it, to show the doom of fruitless professors of religion; and presently the fig-tree withered away. This is almost the only miracle of destruction that Jesus wrought, the rest were miracles of goodness, Matt. xxi. 17—20.

The sum of that religion which Christ taught during his life, consisted chiefly in these few articles:

1. He confirmed the doctrine of the one true God, and the revelation of his mind and will to men, by Moses and the prophets.

2. He explained the moral law, and enforced the observance of it for ever; and summed it up in short in two great commandments, namely, "Love God with all your heart; and, Love your neighbour as yourself."

3. He continued the observance of the ceremonial law for the present, that is, wherever it did not interfere with the duties of the moral law: but where it did interfere, he taught that the moral law was always to be preferred.

4. He required repentance for sin, and faith in himself, as the great Prophet who came to reveal the grace of God to men, both for the pardon of sin, and eternal life.

5. He appointed the profession of his religion to be made by Baptism, to denote the washing away of our sins, and our being renewed to holiness by the Spirit of God.

6. Just before his sufferings and death, he appointed the feast of the Lord's Supper, as a constant memorial of his dying for the sins of men, and our partaking of the benefits thereof, Matt. xxvi. 17—30. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. This dispensation during the life of Christ was a medium between the *Jewish* and *Christian dispensations.*

OF THE DEATH, RESURRECTION, AND ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

When Jesus had instituted his holy supper, knowing that the hour of his sufferings was at hand, he went with his disciples into a neighbouring garden at Gethsemane, where he sustained great and grievous agonies and sorrows in his soul, insomuch, that "he began to be sore amazed and very heavy," or overburdened. He told his disciples, that "his soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death;" and under this agony or sharp conflict, his sweat was like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. These sorrows and agonies could not arise merely from the fears of death, or being nailed to a cross: for then he *would not* have been a fit example of courage and

patience to his disciples and followers, some of whom have suffered the same death of the cross, without such overwhelming terrors and fears as Christ discovered: it has been generally supposed, therefore, and with good reason, that these agonies of his soul arose from a sense of the anger of God for the sins of men, in some way manifested to him; perhaps also increased by the temptations of evil angels, for "it pleased God to bruise him, and make his soul an offering for sin," Is. liii. 6, 10. And it is evident, the powers of darkness were let loose upon him.

In these agonies Jesus prayed three times earnestly, "that if possible, this hour might pass from him;" his innocent human nature being afraid of such sharp and smarting sorrows; yet he submitted himself to the wisdom and will of his Father; and there appeared an angel from heaven, encouraging and strengthening him. At this time, Jesus had withdrawn to a little distance from the rest of his disciples; but Peter, James, and John, were nearest to him, yet they could not help him; and indeed they fell asleep during part of the time.

Judas the traitor had privately departed from the rest of the disciples just after the passover, and having agreed with the chief priests and elders for thirty pieces of silver to betray Jesus into the hands of their officers, he was now at hand with a band of men, with weapons and torches, to accomplish his design and betray his Master.

Several reasons may be assigned for the enmity which the Jewish rulers discovered against Christ, which led them to seek his destruction.—

1. Because he, being a poor man in Israel, and the supposed son of a carpenter, owned himself to be the Messiah, whom they expected to be an earthly king, and to deliver them from subjection to the Romans.

2. Because in his sermons, and in his whole conduct, he endeavoured to reform those corruptions, which the priests and teachers and rulers of the Jews, had brought into their religion.

3. He had foretold the anger of God against them and their nation, in some of his parables pretty plainly, for their great sins, and for the rejection of his ministry.

4. They envied him because many of the people followed him.

When Judas approached Jesus with his murderous design, he agreed with the officers to give them a signal by which they should know him; and accordingly, when he came to him, he said, "Hail, Master; and kissed him." The disciples at first were inclined to attempt the rescue of their Master; and Simon Peter cut off the ear of Malchus, the high priest's servant; but Jesus bade him put up his sword, and healed the man's ear with a touch. Christ further manifested his divine power on this occasion; for, when they asked for Jesus, he answered, "I am he; and they went backward, and fell to the ground." Yet, after this, they persisted to lay hands on him, and took him, and carried him away to Caiaphas the high-priest's house, where the scribes and elders were assembled. The disciples then all forsook him *and fled,* as Christ foretold them they would do.

Peter, who a little before had particularly boasted of his love and courage, followed Jesus afar off into the high-priest's hall, but there, for fear of suffering, he shamefully denied his Lord and Master thrice, and that with swearing and cursing. Jesus had just before checked Peter's self-confidence and professions of extraordinary zeal and courage, and had foretold him, that "he should deny him thrice, before the cock crowed twice;" and when Peter heard the cock crow, and Jesus standing now before the high-priest, turned and looked upon him, his heart melted within him; "and he went out and wept bitterly."

On Christ's examination before the high-priest, several false witnesses accused him about words that he spake; but they agreed not together, and therefore they could not find sufficient cause to condemn him, though they sought it earnestly. At last, the high-priest asked him, "Art thou the Christ, the Son of God?" And Jesus said, "I am; and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." Whereupon they condemned him as worthy of death for blasphemy.

The Jews, being under the government of the Romans, had not the full power of life and death in their own hands; but they showed their spite against Jesus by many indignities offered to him, such as these: they suffered their officers to mock and insult him, to smite and spit upon him, to blindfold and buffet him; and they bound him, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman

governor; nor ever desisted from their malignant efforts till they had procured a sentence of death against him from the Roman governor. When Judas the traitor saw the priests had condemned Christ, he repented of his treachery, and brought the thirty pieces of silver to the priests; he then went away and hanged himself; and falling down his body burst, and his bowels fell out.

Pilate, the Roman governor, declared that he found Jesus to be an innocent man, and that the priests and elders had accused him out of envy, and therefore he would fain have acquitted him: beside which it was the custom at the passover to release some prisoner, and he offered to release Jesus to them at that season, without making farther inquiry into the question of his guilt or innocence; but the Jews rather chose to have Barabbas released, who was a robber and a murderer, and demanded Jesus to be crucified. Pilate at last released Barabbas; and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified, even against his own conscience. He did this partly to please the Jews, and partly lest he should be counted an enemy to Cæsar, if he spared Christ, who did not deny himself to be a king.

Further indignities were now cast on our Saviour; they stripped him of his own clothes, and put on him a scarlet robe in mockery, because he did not deny himself to be "the King of the Jews:" they platted a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, with a reed in his right hand; they bowed the knee before him, and mocked *him*, saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" they

smote him with a reed, and spat upon him; but the blessed Jesus, under all these affronts, "being reviled, reviled not again;" he stood before his accusers and his judges as an innocent lamb stands silent before the shearers; and made very few replies to all their accusations, charges, and inquiries. They then put his own garments on him again, and carried him to Calvary, the place of execution, and there they nailed him on the cross; where they also crucified two malefactors, one on his right hand and the other on his left. Jesus, however, made no resistance, nor even rebuked their wicked cruelty, but only prayed for them, and said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." The inscription set over his head, according to the Roman custom of publishing on the cross the crime for which the malefactor suffered, was, "This is Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews;" it was written in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.

When the soldiers had cast lots for his garments, the rulers mocked him, many of the Jews reviled him, and so did one of the thieves that was crucified with him; but the other thief rebuked his fellow, and acknowledged his own guilt and the innocence of Christ; he prayed that Jesus would "remember him when he came into his kingdom;" and Jesus said, "Verily, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." When Jesus saw his own mother Mary standing near the cross, he commended her to the care of John, his beloved disciple, and from that time John took her to his own house. Towards the close of his sufferings Jesus cried out, "My

God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and a little after he said, "It is finished;" then he cried with a loud voice, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit," and died immediately.

Several remarkable occurrences attended the death of Christ, such as,

1. At the sixth hour there was darkness over the whole land till the ninth; that is, from noon till three o'clock in the afternoon.

2. The vail of the temple, which divided the *holy place* from the *holy of holies*, was rent from the top to the bottom.

3. There was an earthquake, the rocks were rent, graves were then opened, and many of the pious dead arose after his resurrection, and appeared to several persons in Jerusalem.

4. The centurion who guarded the crucifixion of Christ, seeing these things, was constrained to confess, "Truly this man was the Son of God."

After the death of Jesus, when they broke the legs of the thieves who were crucified, that they might die the sooner, and be taken down from the cross before the sabbath, they brake not the legs of Jesus, because he was already dead; but a soldier pierced his side with a spear, and there issued blood and water. After this, Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, went to Pilate, begged the body of Jesus, wrapped it in clean linen, with spices, laid it in his own new tomb, and rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre; and to secure him from rising again, the Jews desired Pilate to set a guard of soldiers about the sepulchre; and that *they might* know if the tomb had been opened,

they sealed the stone that was rolled to the door of it.

Q. How did Jesus arise from the dead?

A. Early on the first day of the week there was a great earthquake, an angel rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it; "his countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow;" the keepers shook for fear, and Jesus rose and departed. Early in the morning after the sabbath, some good women came to bring spices and ointments to anoint the body, and they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, and an angel told them "Jesus was risen," and bade them go tell his disciples; on hearing this, Peter and John both went to the sepulchre, and found the linen clothes and the napkin, in which the body was wrapped, and were convinced that "Jesus was risen." When the guards told the chief priests what was done, the priests and elders bribed them largely to say, that while they fell asleep, his disciples came by night and stole him away; and the priests persuaded the governor to forgive them for sleeping.

After his resurrection, Jesus appeared first to Mary Magdalen; afterwards to two disciples going to Emmaus; then to the apostles assembled, without Thomas; and all this on the day of his resurrection; afterwards he appeared to the apostles when Thomas was with them; again at the sea of Tiberias to seven of his disciples; then to eleven of his disciples on a mountain in Galilee; then near Jerusalem, when he ascended to heaven. He continued on earth, after his resurrection, forty

days, giving his disciples further instruction in the great things of the Gospel, which they were not prepared to receive before his death. The particulars of these various interviews are as follows:

(1.) With Mary Magdalen.—When she found not Jesus in the tomb she turned away from the sepulchre, and she saw Jesus, but knew him not, till he called her by her name: on her recognizing Him, he said to her, "Touch me not" at present, "but go to my brethren, and tell them, I ascend to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."

(2.) With his disciples going to Emmaus.—He joined himself to them as they were walking; he reproved them for their unbelief; he proved to them out of the prophets that the Messiah was to suffer death, and to enter into glory; he went into the house and ate with them; and when they began to know him, he vanished out of their sight.

(3.) To the apostles when Thomas was absent the same evening.—When the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst of them; he blessed them, and gave them a commission to preach the Gospel; he breathed on them, and bade them "receive the Holy Ghost."

(4.) When Thomas was with them.—A week after, Jesus stood in the midst of them again, when the doors were shut, and bade Thomas see and feel the marks of the nails in his hands, and of the spear in his side, and rebuked his unbelief. *Thomas* then, with surprise and joy acknowledged *him;* he broke out into a rapture of zeal and

worship, and said to him, "My Lord and my God," ver. 28.

(5.) At the sea of Tiberias some of them went a fishing, and caught nothing all night: Jesus stood on the shore in the morning, and bade them cast the net on the right side of the ship; and they took a multitude of fishes. When they knew it was their Lord, Peter cast himself into the sea; and when they were come to the shore, they ate some broiled fish, and Jesus ate with them. At this interview Peter was very gently rebuked for having denied his Master. Jesus asked him three times, whether he loved him or no; and then he foretold that Peter should love him so well as to suffer and die for His sake.

(6.) On a mountain in Galilee.—Jesus appointed them to meet him there; he told them that all power in heaven and earth was given into his hand: he gave them their commission to preach the Gospel to all nations; and promised his presence with them, and a power to work miracles, for the vindication of their doctrine.

(7.) Jesus also appeared to five hundred brethren at once, for St. Paul asserts it, 1 Cor. xv. 6. and it was neither the first nor the last time of his appearance; but when it was is uncertain.

(8.) Finally Jesus manifested himself to the disciples near Jerusalem.—He met them, and led them out as far as to Mount Olivet, near Bethany; he bade them to tarry at Jerusalem till the promised Spirit should fall upon them; he repeated their commission, appointed them to be witnesses for him in the world; and, having blessed them,

he ascended to heaven in a bright cloud. While they were gazing towards heaven, two angels appeared, and assured them, that they should see him return in the same manner as he ascended. The disciples then worshipped Christ as he ascended to heaven, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, praising God.

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES,

CHIEFLY PETER AND JOHN; AND THE DEACONS, STEPHEN AND PHILIP.

The first remarkable thing the apostles did toward their future ministry, after they returned to Jerusalem, was their choosing two out of their company there, that one of them might be an "apostle and witness of the resurrection of Christ," in the room of Judas the traitor. In order to determine which of those two should be the man, they called upon the Lord by prayer, then cast lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, "who was numbered with the eleven apostles."

On the day of Pentecost, which was ten days after the ascension of Christ, the Spirit of God was sent down upon them. The house where they were met was filled with the sound of a rushing wind, and cloven tongues of fire appeared as sitting on all their heads. The first effect of the descent of the Holy Spirit upon them, was that of enabling them all to speak with various tongues the *wonder*ful works of God, to the amazement of the

Jews, and a multitude of proselytes of all nations that were then at Jerusalem. Peter (who seems to have been the chief speaker on that occasion) preached to this multitude, bearing witness to the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, and the pouring out of the Spirit of God on men; partly from his own knowledge, and from these present visible effects thereof among them, and partly from the prophecies and promises of Scripture; he led them to Christ as a Saviour and Lord, he called them to repentance of their sins, and a profession of their faith in Jesus, by being baptized in his name. This sermon had such success, that three thousand souls were added to the disciples of Christ, and baptized on that day.

These primitive converts discovered, in an eminent degree, a spirit of devotion toward God and Christ, with a spirit of benevolence and intimate friendship toward each other; so far, that they were daily in the temple praising God; they were most frequently, or rather continually, engaged in prayer, and in remembering the death of Christ, by breaking bread with joy; and they so liberally distributed to the poor, that none was in want. These were the glorious effects of Christianity in its first appearance. This was the proper beginning of the kingdom of Christ, or the Christian dispensation, which was set up in the world in its glory, at the pouring down of the Spirit, after the ascension of Christ, and his exaltation to the government of the world and the church.

The apostles continued effectually to prove their

doctrine, and their commission to preach; by doing many signs and wonders among the people, which were the gifts of the Spirit, proceeding from an exalted Saviour. A remarkable miracle was wrought by Peter and John at the temple gate. A beggar that was born a cripple received the use of his limbs, when they bade him "rise up and walk in the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Peter took occasion from this miracle to preach this new doctrine, namely, the resurrection of Christ, and salvation in his name, citing the ancient prophets to confirm it. In consequence of this sermon, five thousand were converted to the faith of Christ: but the priests and rulers put the apostles in prison. When the apostles were brought the next day before the priests and rulers, they took courage again, and preached to the court the doctrine of the Gospel of Christ; and silenced their enemies, by having the cripple that was healed stand among them. After this their defence, they were dismissed, and charged to preach no more in the name of Jesus; but Peter and John declared they would obey God rather than man. When the apostles were discharged they went to their own company, and gave glory to God in prayer and praise; and their whole assembly was filled with the Holy Ghost, and boldly spake the word of God.

Such was the liberality of these first believers, and the souls of all them that were so united in love to Christ, and one another, that they sold their possessions and goods, and threw all into a *common stock*, which the apostles divided to every

man according to his need. But among those who professed to do so, there was one Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, who sold a possession, and secretly withheld part of the money, though they declared they had paid it all in: they met with an awful punishment for this their hypocrisy and deceit; for Peter charged them with "lying to the Holy Ghost," and struck them both dead with his word. This miracle discouraged others that were in the church from practising the like deceit, and frightened hypocrites from coming into the church, merely in hopes of maintenance. Many other miracles, chiefly miracles of mercy, were wrought by the apostles; multitudes of sick were healed, and those who were possessed with devils were relieved, both in Jerusalem and the cities round about. The high-priests and rulers, enraged at the success of the apostles, again put them in prison; but the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and sent them again to preach the Gospel.

When they were brought again before the rulers, they charged them with putting Christ to death, and declared they were witnesses of his resurrection; and that "God had exalted him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins." At the advice of Gamaliel, (who doubted whether the hand of God was not with the apostles,) the rulers and elders dismissed the apostles again; but they beat them first, and again commanded them to preach Jesus Christ no more.

As the converts multiplied, the apostles found

that the labour was too much for them, and therefore they bade the disciples choose out seven men (who were afterwards called deacons) to take care of the poor, that they might more constantly be engaged in preaching and prayer. When the people had chosen persons to fill this office of a deacon, the apostles prayed, and laid their hands on them. The most considerable of these seven men were Stephen and Philip, who were full of faith and zeal, and had great gifts communicated to them.

Stephen wrought wonders, and no doubt preached the word with power, till he was accused to the council for blasphemy against God and Moses. He defended himself by a long rehearsal of their ancient histories; he charged them and their fathers with resisting the Holy Spirit, with killing the prophets, and with breaking the law of God; and upbraided them at last with the murder of Christ. When he told them further, that "he saw the heavens opened, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God," they, with a loud voice, cried out against him as a blasphemer; they cast him out of the city, and stoned him. Stephen being the first martyr for Christ, gave a glorious instance of his faith and love. At his death he prayed, and said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit;" he prayed also for his enemies, saying, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

Philip, the deacon, went down to Samaria, and preached Christ among them, and healed the sick, and cast out devils. Many of the Samaritans *believed in* Christ, and were baptized; and among

the rest one Simon, a sorcerer, was baptized; he is commonly called Simon Magus. That these believers at Samaria might receive the Holy Spirit also, Peter and John, the apostles, came down from Jerusalem, and laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. On this occasion, Simon Magus betrayed his own hypocrisy and falsehood; for he offered them money that he might have power to communicate the Holy Ghost to others by laying on his hands; but Peter said to him, "Thy money perish with thee! Thou hast no part with us in this matter; for thy heart is not right in the sight of God."

The angel of the Lord sent Philip the deacon to meet a great officer of the queen of Ethiopia upon the road, as he was returning from Jerusalem, where he had been to worship as a proselyte. When Philip met him, he was sitting in his chariot, and reading the 53d chapter of Isaiah, where it is written, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter;" and upon his inquiry, "Who was the person of whom the prophet spake?" Philip preached Jesus Christ the Saviour to him. This discourse of Philip fully convinced his mind; he professed his faith that Jesus is the Son of God, and was baptized as soon as they came to any water. As for Philip, the Spirit of the Lord caught him away, and carried him to Azotus; whence he travelled to Cesarea, and preached to all the cities upon the road.

The next account of Peter, is, that he went down to Lydda, and cured Eneas, who had kept his bed eight years with the palsy; he also went

to Joppa, and raised from the dead Dorcas; she was a woman full of good works, and who made garments for the poor. In consequence of these miracles, many at Lydda and Joppa believed and turned to the Lord.

While Peter resided at Joppa, Cornelius, a centurion that feared God, and prayed to him daily, was ordered by an angel in a vision to send for Peter, that he might teach him the way of salvation. Peter, being a Jew, would have thought it unlawful to keep company with the Gentiles; that is, to go and sojourn, and eat with them in a familiar manner, as thinking them unclean: but God forewarned him in a vision, just before the messengers came to him, that he should freely go and preach to the Gentiles who sent for him. While the messengers of Cornelius drew near the city, Peter went upon the house-top to pray; and a great sheet appeared to be let down from heaven, with all manner of unclean beasts and birds, and creeping things; and a voice bade Peter kill and eat, nor call those things unclean which God hath cleansed.

By this vision Peter seems to have been instructed in two things at once; namely, he was taught literally and expressly, that there were no more Jewish distinctions of meats to be observed; and he was taught, by way of emblem, that the Gentiles should no longer be counted unclean, or unfit for Jews familiarly to eat and converse with. When Peter arrived at Cesarea, *he* thus began his sermon to Cornelius and his *friends*: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no

respecter of persons; but in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him." He then preached the life and death and resurrection of Christ; and that he was ordained to be the Judge of the world; and that whosoever believeth in him should have remission of sins. While Peter spake these words, "the Holy Ghost fell on all those that were present; and they spake with tongues, and were baptized in the name of the Lord."

When the Jewish believers reproved Peter for conversing and eating with Gentiles, he related the whole story both of his own vision upon the house-top, and of the angel that was sent to Cornelius, and the wonderful success of his sermon; upon which they held their peace, and glorified God. The disciples of Christ had been free from persecution for a considerable time in Judæa, and Galilee, and Samaria, till Herod killed James, the brother of John, with the sword, and put Peter in prison. But Peter miraculously escaped from his hands, for prayer was made by the church without ceasing for him, and while he was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and the centinels kept the prison door, at night a light shone in the prison, and the angel of the Lord awakened him, the chains fell from his hands, the gates opened of their own accord, and the angel brought him into the street, and departed. Peter then went to the house of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where the disciples were met together for prayer, and

he ordered them to acquaint the brethren of his miraculous deliverance.

Herod was exceedingly enraged at his disappointment, and commanded the keepers of the prison to be put to death; but shortly after a remarkable judgment of God fell upon Herod. On a special occasion, sitting on his throne in his royal robes, he made a speech to the people; upon which they cried out, "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man:" and immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten of worms, and died. Peter still preached the Gospel to the world; he encouraged the receiving the Gentiles into the church without circumcision, by his own example; he wrote letters to encourage the believers under persecution; till at last he was crucified, as Christ had foretold him. First and Second Epistle of Peter. John xxi. 18, 19. 2 Pet. i. 13—15.

John also preached the word, and wrote the history of the life and death of Christ, which is called the Gospel: he wrote several Epistles to the Christians: he was banished to the isle of Patmos, for the sake of Christ, where he wrote the book of the Revelation: in what order he wrote these things does not appear from Scripture.

It has been inquired why, in the early addresses of the apostles, we do not find them insisting more expressly on that great article of the Gospel, redemption by Christ's death, and the atonement made for sin by his sufferings; but it is

sufficiently evident that this doctrine was taught the world by Peter and John, as well as by Paul, since there is frequent mention of it in their Epistles, as well as that it shines every where through the Epistles of St. Paul: nor can we suppose their preaching utterly forgot, or neglected what their writings abound with, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. ii. 24. iii. 18. and iv. 1. John i. 7. ii. 2. iii. 16. and v. 6. and therefore it is possible they might preach it sometimes at first, though it be not expressly recorded in such short abstracts of their sermons, as we find in the book of Acts: or, if this doctrine was not published at first with frequency and freedom, there seems to be a very good reason for it, namely, because neither the Jews nor Gentiles could well bear it so soon; for it was "a stumbling block to the Jews, and foolishness to the Greeks," 1 Cor. i. 23. And they were to be led by degrees into a full acquaintance with the mystery of the Gospel; even as Christ himself led his own disciples by slow degrees into the knowledge of this and other things, "as they were able to bear them," John xvi. 12.

THE ACTS OF PAUL THE APOSTLE,—HIS TRAVELS AND SUFFERINGS, HIS LIFE AND DEATH.

Paul was a Jew of the tribe of Benjamin, born at Tarsus; his name at first was Saul, he was brought up in the strict sect of the Pharisees, a man of good morals, and exceedingly zealous for the traditions of the Fathers, Acts xxiii. 6. and

xxi. 39. Phil. iii. 5, 6. Gal. i. 14. Acts vii. 58. He was a very great persecutor in his younger years; he made a havoc of the church every where, sending men and women to prison, and he encouraged those who stoned Stephen. He became a Christian under circumstances the most extraordinary. As he was going to Damascus, with orders from the high-priest to bring all the Christians he could find there bound to Jerusalem, he was struck down on the road, by a blaze of light from heaven, and a voice from heaven said to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest." On hearing this Saul trembled, and cried out, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" and the Lord bade him arise, and go to the city of Damascus, and there he should be told his duty. He arose from the earth, and finding that he was struck blind, he was led by the hand into Damascus, where he was three days without sight and without food, and much engaged in prayer.

At the expiration of that time, Ananias, a disciple, was ordered by the Lord in a vision to go to Saul, in the house where he lodged, to restore his eyesight; and to tell him what honour and duty God had appointed for him. Ananias was at first afraid to go, because he had heard of his cruel persecution of the Christians: but the Lord assured him that Saul would receive him, because he had given him also a vision of one Ananias to prepare him for his coming. Ananias then went, and laid his hands upon him, and he received his sight, and was filled with the Holy

Ghost, and was baptized. The Lord Jesus ordered Ananias to tell Saul, that God had chosen him to know his will, to see Jesus, and to be a witness for Christ to the world. And some time after that, Christ himself in another vision sent him to preach to the heathen nations.

After his wonderful conversion, Saul remained a few days with the disciples at Damascus, and he soon preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God, to the amazement of those who heard him. It is generally supposed that he was taught the Gospel by Jesus Christ himself, in the three days of his blindness, for he declares he "learnt it not from men." When he went from Damascus, he preached the Gospel in Arabia, and returned again to Damascus, and did not go up to the apostles at Jerusalem, till three years after. When he returned to Damascus, the Jews watched the gates night and day to slay him, but the disciples took him by night, and let him down by the wall in a basket, Acts ix. 23—25, and 2 Cor. xi. 32, 33. When he came to Jerusalem, the disciples were all afraid of him, because he had been so great a persecutor of the Christians but a very few years before; but Barnabas brought him to the apostles, and gave an account of Christ's calling him from heaven, and his preaching boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus. This Barnabas was a Levite of Cyprus, whose original name was Joses. He was a zealous disciple of Christ, and a preacher of the Gospel; the apostles surnamed him Barnabas, that is, the son of consolation.

After this, Saul preached Christ at Jerusalem with great courage; but the Grecians (that is, the Hellenists or Grecian Jews) sought to slay him, and then the brethren persuaded him to retire to his native place, Tarsus in Cilicia; besides this, as he was praying in the temple he saw the Lord, who assured him that the Jews would not receive his witness concerning him, and bade him depart from Jerusalem, for that he would send him to the Gentiles. When the apostles heard of the great success of the Gospel in foreign countries, they sent Barnabas as far as Antioch in Syria to confirm the disciples. From thence he went to Tarsus to seek Saul, and brought him to Antioch, where they spent a whole year together, and there the disciples were first called Christians. After this, the Holy Spirit appointed the prophets and teachers at Antioch to separate Barnabas and Saul to the work to which he had called them, that is, to preach to the idolatrous Gentiles. This was done by fasting, prayer, and laying on their hands. The assistant or attendant of the apostles in this journey, was John Mark, nephew to Barnabas. When they came to Paphos in Cyprus, Sergius Paulus, the governor of the country, sent for them, that he might hear the word of God; but Elymas, a Jew, who was a false prophet and a sorcerer, withstood them, in order to prevent the governor from believing. Elymas was signally punished for this crime, for Saul (who from this time is called Paul in Scripture) struck him blind with his word, upon which the governor believed in Christ. From *Paphos they* went to Pamphylia in Asia, and

there John Mark left Paul and Barnabas, and returned to Jerusalem.

The next remarkable labours of Paul and Barnabas on record, are at Antioch in Pisidia, where Paul preached in the synagogue of the Jews and proved Jesus to be the promised Saviour; and published his death and resurrection, and forgiveness of sins through his name. Paul's preaching produced a strong effect upon the inhabitants of that city; many of the Jews, filled with envy, contradicted the words of Paul, and blasphemed Christ; upon which Paul declared, that since the Jews rejected the Gospel, they would turn to the Gentiles, according to the command of the Lord. Many of the Gentiles believed the word of the Lord, which seems to be the very first remarkable conversion of the idolatrous Gentiles: but the Jews prevailed so far as to drive Paul and Barnabas out of their coast, who shook off the dust of their feet against them, according to the command of Christ, Matt. x. 14. Barnabas and Paul next went to Iconium, and preached the Gospel with some success there, both among the Jews and Gentiles, till, being in danger of stoning, they fled to Lystra.

At Lystra, a man that was born a cripple, hearing Paul preach, was healed by him, and he leaped and walked. On witnessing this miracle, the people supposed Paul and Barnabas to be two of their gods, namely, Jupiter and Mercury, who were come down in the likeness of men; and Barnabas and Paul had much ado to hinder the people from offering sacrifice to them; but they

were so changeable, that by the persuasion of certain wicked Jews, they quickly stoned Paul, and left him for dead: but when his enemies were gone, he rose up, and went with Barnabas through many cities where they had preached the Gospel to confirm the disciples; and then they returned to Antioch in Syria, from whence they had been sent forth, and recommended to the grace of God. While they were at Antioch, new troubles arose in the church. Some Jewish Christians coming from Judæa, taught the brethren that they could not be saved, unless they were circumcised, and kept the law of Moses: great uneasiness being occasioned hereby, Paul and Barnabas were sent to Jerusalem to the apostles and elders about this question. It is probable that at this time Paul told Peter, James, and John of the liberty of the Gospel, or the freedom from all Jewish ceremonies, which he preached to the Gentiles, Gal. ii. 1—9. and which he calls *his* Gospel, he being eminently the apostle of the Gentiles, Gal. ii. 7—9. and 1 Tim. ii. 7.

In the discussion of this controversy, first, Peter declared that the Gentiles had received the Gospel from his mouth as well as the Jews; and there was now no difference between them, since God had declared his acceptance of them by giving them the Holy Spirit, and that without circumcision. Secondly, Barnabas and Paul rehearsed what wondrous success God had given to their ministry among the Gentiles, and what miracles were wrought among them: then James delivered his *opinion, that* since the Gentiles had received the

Gospel, as it was foretold by the prophets, they should not be burdened with circumcision and other Jewish ceremonies: upon which, at last, the apostles and elders, and the whole church, sent a message to Antioch, and other countries, that the Gentile converts were not bound by the Jewish laws; yet by the direction of the Holy Spirit, they required them at that time "to abstain from meats offered to idols, from eating blood, from things strangled, and from fornication." As a reason why these few* things were so particularly

* Fornication was a thing always unlawful in itself, yet here other things are joined with it which are not sinful in their own nature; because the eating of blood, and things offered to idols, were frequently attended with fornication and impurity among the Gentiles, at their idolatrous feasts; and therefore this sin of fornication is expressly forbidden here, to put the Christians always in mind of the unlawfulness of it; and more particularly, because some professed Christians in that age pretended it to be lawful, such as the Gnostics, Nicolaitans, &c. Abstinence from things offered to idols seems to be but a temporary command, for particular times and places; since it is permitted in some cases by the apostle, namely where it gives no offence, 1 Cor. x. 19—31. And abstinence from blood, not being in itself unlawful, seems to stand on the same foot: for it is plain, that the reason given against eating blood is, because it was devoted to God to make atonement for sin, Lev. xvii. 10—14. And the blood of beasts slain for food was to be poured out on the ground, because the life, or most noble part of the creature, was contained in it; and was devoted to God, as a sort of first-fruits, to sanctify the rest for the eater's use. But now the blood of Christ having made full atonement for sin,

forbidden to the Gentile converts, some suppose they were the things always forbidden to the Jewish proselytes of the gate, and that it would have given too much offence to the Jews, as well as to those proselytes, if the apostles had not required the Gentile converts to observe these rules, at least for the present season.

Paul and Barnabas next determined to visit their brethren in every city where they had preached the Gospel; but they could not agree about taking John Mark for their assistant, because he had before left them in the midst of their work. So Barnabas took Mark, and sailed to Cyprus: Paul chose Silas, (who had been sent with them from Jerusalem to Antioch,) and went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches. Soon after this, Paul met with Timothy, a young disciple, at Lystra, the son of a Jewish woman, and took him for their companion in the ministry; and they travelled through many parts of that country, which is now called the Lesser Asia.*

and all sorts of food under the New Testament being sanctified to the eater by the word and prayer, 1 Tim. iv. 3—5. blood has neither of these uses continued; and is therefore one of those meats which may be eaten with thanksgiving, though it was forbidden at first for a season, together with meats offered to idols, lest the Jews and proselytes should take offence.

* The Asia which the Scripture so frequently speaks of in the Acts seems to be but a small part of Lesser Asia, including only Phrygia, Mysia, Caria, and Lybia, which are washed on the west by the Ægean Sea; and *where the* famous seven churches were, Rev. i. 4.

Paul and his company were next invited by a vision to Macedonia, and they went to Philippi, a chief city of that country, and preached there with some success. Here it is probable that Luke, who wrote the Acts of the Apostles, became a companion of Paul, because from this time he uses the word WE in his history. At Philippi they cast a devil out of a certain young woman, who brought much gain to her masters by foretelling things to come. When her masters saw their gains were gone, they brought Paul and Silas to the magistrates, and charged them with teaching strange customs; whereupon they were beaten and imprisoned, and their feet made fast in the stocks; but at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises to God; and the prison was shaken with an earthquake, the doors opened, and their bands were loosed; upon which the gaoler, awaking, was going to kill himself, supposing the prisoners had fled. This self-murder was prevented by Paul and Silas showing themselves as his prisoners. They preached the Gospel to him; upon which he believed and was baptized with all his house. In the morning the magistrates desired them to depart when they knew they were Romans, because they had beaten and imprisoned them uncondemned.

At Thessalonica, whither they went next, many Greeks and Jews were converted, but the unbelieving Jews rose up against them there, and almost in every city where they came. They went next to Berea. The Jews of Berea acted more nobly than those of Thessalonica, for they

"searched the Scriptures daily," to find whether Paul and Silas taught the truth; and by this practice many of them were led to believe in Christ. When Paul came to Athens, he disputed with the Jews in their synagogues, with the devout persons, and with the heathen philosophers in the market-place: and on Mars Hill he took occasion to preach the true God to the people, from an altar he found inscribed, "To the Unknown God." By preaching natural religion first, he led them by degrees to the doctrine of Christ, and assured them that Jesus Christ was appointed to be the Judge of the world, and that God had raised him from the dead, as a sure token of it.

At Corinth, Paul met with Aquila, a believing Jew, with his wife Priscilla, and wrought with him at his trade, for they were both tent-makers; but he preached in the Jewish synagogue every sabbath. He continued there, by orders received from Christ in a vision, a year and six months; and some Jews and many Gentiles believed and were baptized. He however met with persecution there, for the Jews brought him before Gallio the deputy governor, but he wisely refused to take cognizance of any of their controversies about religion, unless they could have charged him with some wickedness or injustice. Though Paul found such great and remarkable success in his ministry among the Corinthians, yet by the means of some false brethren, and some ambitious pretenders to apostleship, there were such factions and contentions raised in this church, as cost him much sorrow of heart: and this was increased by the

irregular lives and immoral practices of some of his converts there, which occasioned his writing two large and excellent epistles to them. It is thought most probable, that Paul, who went from Corinth to Cenchrea, and to Ephesus, left Aquila and Priscilla at Ephesus, where they instructed Apollos, a fervent preacher, a disciple of John the Baptist, in the Gospel of Christ; but that Paul himself went to Jerusalem to the feast, and returned to Ephesus again before Aquila went thence, and before his great success at Ephesus began.

When Paul came to Ephesus, he found some persons who were baptized only unto John's baptism, and he preached Jesus Christ to them, and they believed, and were baptized in the name of Christ; and when Paul laid his hands on them, they received the Holy Ghost, and spake with tongues. Three months Paul continued to preach the Gospel in the Jewish synagogue; but when the Jews were hardened against him, he taught the same Gospel in the school of one Tyrannus for near two years, and healed many diseases, and cast out evil spirits. He was however persecuted by the heathens in this place.

When Demetrius, a silversmith, who made silver shrines for the goddess Diana, (whose famous temple stood at Ephesus,) found that the worship of the goddess declined through Paul's preaching, he stirred up the men of his trade, and by them a multitude of people were raised against Paul, so that he was in danger of his life. The town clerk of the city, finding such a rude tumult, with soft words composed and quieted the people,

and bade Demetrius go fairly to law, if any man had injured him. The uproar being thus composed, Paul took his leave of the disciples, and after several short journeys and labours in the Gospel in those parts, he came to Troas. There they abode seven days, and on the eve of his departure Paul preached, and broke bread, on the first day of the week, and continuing his speech till midnight, a young man named Eutychus slept, and fell down from the third story, and was taken up dead. The young man was miraculously recovered; for Paul fell on him, and embraced him, and brought him alive before them.

At Miletus Paul sent to Ephesus, and calling the elders of the church, made a most affectionate discourse to them; bade them take heed to themselves and to the church of God, which he had purchased with his own blood; warned them of grievous wolves that should enter into the flock, encouraged them to persevere in faith and holiness, and recommended them to God and the word of his grace. Paul next hastened to Jerusalem by many journeys and voyages, though he was dissuaded from it by many disciples; and was particularly told by Agabus, a Christian prophet, that he should be bound at Jerusalem, and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles. Agabus delivered this prophecy in an emblematical manner, for he bound his own hands and feet with Paul's girdle, and said, "Thus saith the Holy Spirit, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owns this girdle." When the brethren wept at *the thought* of his sufferings, Paul nobly answered,

"What mean ye to weep and to break my heart? for I am ready, not to be bound only, but to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

When Paul came to Jerusalem, he went to James the apostle, and to the elders, and declared what God had wrought by his ministry among the Gentiles. Here he now published freely to the whole church his success among idolaters, which he had communicated only before privately, and to a few, Gal. ii. 2. The elders at Jerusalem advised Paul to shave and purify himself by an offering, after the manner of the Jews, who had the vow of the Nazarite upon them, (Numb. vi.) that he might not be suspected of disobeying the Jewish law, either by the believing or unbelieving Jews, who were all zealous for it. With this advice the apostle complied, considering the Jewish rites of shaving his head and sacrificing, as things left indifferent to the Jews for a season, by the will of God, in compliance with the weakness of man. But Paul was not hereby secured from the persecution of the unbelieving Jews, for they had such a rooted hatred against him for his zeal and success in preaching up Christianity, that they seized him under pretence of his having brought Greeks into the temple, though that was not true; and they were ready to tear him to pieces, till the chief captain rescued him, and gave him leave to give an account of himself to the multitude.

Paul in his defence gave them the history of his being a Jew by birth, and brought up at the feet of Gamaliel, in Jerusalem: of his former zeal against Christ; his being struck down to the

ground on the road, and spoken to from heaven by Jesus Christ; and also of his vision of Christ in the temple, sending him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles. When he spake of being sent to the Gentiles, they lifted up their voices, and said, "Away with such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit he should live." In order to secure him from their rage, the chief captain again seized him, and brought him into the castle, and the next day he ordered the chief priests and the council to appear, that Paul might give an account of himself to them. When Paul pleaded his own cause before the council he found one part was Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, and the other part Pharisees, who believed it; and therefore he artfully and yet truly declared, "It is for the hope of the resurrection of the dead I am called in question;" for indeed the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and our resurrection by him, are some of the greatest articles of the Christian faith, and that which Paul preached. This had such an effect upon the council that they fell into contention among themselves, and the Pharisees said, "they found no evil in him;" and again the chief captain secured him in the castle. Paul had particular encouragement from heaven under these sufferings; for it was this night that the Lord Jesus appeared to him, and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome."

The next danger he was exposed to was this: more than forty Jews had bound themselves under

a great curse, "not to eat till they had killed Paul;" and therefore they persuaded the chief priests and elders to desire that he might once again be brought before them. But the providence of God secured Paul from this conspiracy, for Claudius Lysias, the chief captain, having private notice of this conspiracy from Paul's nephew, sent him to Cesarea, to Felix the governor of Judæa, by night, with a guard of almost five hundred men.

The high-priests and elders next went down to Cesarea, and laid their accusation before Felix: but Paul defended himself by declaring "he believed the Law and the Prophets;" nor was he guilty of profaning the temple, or raising a tumult, nor of any thing of which they accused him. Felix only kept him a prisoner, for he saw no reason to condemn him; and often discoursed with him, hoping that Paul or his friends would give him a good bribe for a release. Once as Paul spoke "concerning faith in Christ, and reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled," and bade Paul retire till he had a more convenient season to hear him further. But he kept him prisoner still to please the Jews.

Two years after this, Festus was made governor in the room of Felix, and the Jews went to Cesarea, and laid grievous complaints against him. Paul utterly denied the charge of the Jews: and when Festus would have had him go up to Jerusalem to be judged in these matters, as the Jews desired him, in hopes to kill him by the way, Paul told Festus, that he knew very well he had done the Jews no wrong, that no man ought to

deliver him up to the hands of the Jews, and therefore he appealed to Cæsar.

Paul afterwards was admitted to plead his cause again before Agrippa, the king of Galilee, who, with his sister Bernice, came to make a visit to Festus. Paul knew that Agrippa was acquainted with the laws and customs of the Jews, and therefore he related before him in brief the history of his younger life, as a Pharisee; his hatred to the Christians; his being called by Jesus Christ from heaven, when he was on the road to Damascus; and his preaching the resurrection of Christ and his Gospel ever since; which he maintained to be all agreeable to Moses and the Prophets. His address was so agreeable and impressive, that Agrippa declared that "he was almost persuaded to be a Christian," and that Paul had done nothing worthy of death, or of bonds; and that he might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to Cæsar.

Paul was then sent to Cæsar at Rome; he went thither by sea, with several other prisoners, and soldiers to guard them: they had a voyage of the utmost danger, through storms and dark weather, which Paul foresaw, and warned the sailors of it. They were at last shipwrecked, but all escaped safe to land, as Paul had assured them by a vision of an angel. The name of the island was called Melita, now Malta. The rain and cold made them kindle a fire, and there came a viper from among the sticks, and fastened on Paul's hand. When the barbarous people of the *island* saw this, they thought at first this man

was a murderer, and that vengeance pursued him on land, though he had escaped the sea: but when they saw him shake off the viper, and no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said he was a god. Other miracles were wrought there. Publius, the chief man of the island, lodged Paul three days: when he prayed, and healed his father of a bloody-flux, by laying on his hands; upon which many other diseased persons came and were healed. They tarried three months, because it was winter: and then sailed again, and landed in Italy, and travelled towards Rome, where Paul was suffered to dwell by himself, with a soldier that kept him.

In three days after his arrival, Paul sent for the chief of the Jews that were in the city, and excused himself to them that he was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar; and afterwards, on a day appointed, he preached the Gospel of Christ to them out of the law of Moses and the Prophets. On hearing this, the Jews at Rome were much divided; some believed the Gospel, and others opposed it; upon which Paul answered, that "the salvation of God is sent to the Gentiles, and they will hear it." Paul continued to dwell two whole years in his own hired house, and preached the things concerning Christ, to all that would come to hear him.

Here ends the history of the book of Scripture, called the *Acts of the Apostles*. What remains is collected from the epistles of Paul.

During his imprisonment, St. Paul is supposed

to have written several of his epistle
to the Philippians, Ephesians, Colossi
Philemon. When he was released fro
Rome, he went into several countri
Europe and Asia, preaching the Gosp
firming the Christian converts. He w
and assisted in his ministry and travels
by Tychicus, or Timothy; sometimes
Demas, or Luke, Silas or Trophimus
left sick at Miletum when he went agai
See 2 Tim. iv. 10—12. When he
second time to Rome, he was cast in
prison, and when he made his first defe
forsook him; and Alexander, the copp
him much injury, 2 Tim. iv. 14—16.

In all probability he finished his life
here, for he now tells Timothy, that "
his departure is at hand," and he was
to be offered up," when he wrote
Epistle to him from Rome, 2 Tim. i
when he had both laboured and suffere
any of the apostles, as he himself h
1 Cor. xv. 10. 2 Cor. xi. 23, &c., he w
as a martyr for Christ, under the reig
emperor of Rome, as the ancient his
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S FROM THE DEAD.
m (Mat. xxi. 1. 11.)
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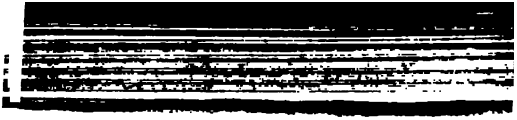
he is "*the way*," "*the truth*," *and* "*the*
"*another Comforter*."
o "a vine," & his *disciples* to "the branches."
Christ appeareth to Peter, Thomas, &c. at
and makes himself known to them by a
HT OF FISHES.
three times about his love for Him, and
of Peter's death.

arances of our Lord to his disciples after his
corded by the Evangelists and St. Paul.

alone." Mark xvi. 9.
with several other women." Mat. xxviii. 9.
d Cephas.") 1 Cor. xv. 5.
going to Emmaus." Luke xxiv. 13.
erusalem *with the doors shut on the first day*
xx. 19. Luke xxiv. 37—43.
s, when he satisfied Thomas." John xx. 26.
ciples *at the sea of Tiberias*." John xxi. 1.
d brethren at once." 1 Cor. xv. 6.



JEWISH HISTORY

BETWEEN THE TIMES OF THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT.

MALACHI, the last of the ancient sacred prophets, foretold the advent of Jesus Christ, and the coming of his fore-runner John the Baptist, about four hundred years before those momentous events.

Nehemiah was contemporary with Malachi; but how long he lived at Jerusalem after his reformation of the religious and political affairs of the Jews we have no means of precisely ascertaining. After his decease, Judea appears to have been added to the prefecture of Syria, and it remained altogether subject to the Persian governor of that province, under whom the high-priest prescribed, and enforced such laws of general policy as he might think proper, or the state of things required. Even the high-priest himself, in some instances, was appointed by the governor.

Alexander the great, procuring himself to be chosen general of the Grecian forces against the Persians, defeated their army in Cilicia, under Darius their sovereign, B.C. 333. He then subdued all Syria and Phœnicia, and marched into Judea, to punish the Jews for supplying his enemies with provisions, while they refused such assistance to him. Jaddua, the high-priest,

hearing of his approach, called upon the people to unite with him in sacrifices and prayer, that God would avert the threatening calamity. Having humbled themselves before the Lord, it was communicated to Jaddua in a dream, that he should go and meet the conqueror, robed in his pontifical habits, and accompanied by all the priests in their sacerdotal garments. Attended by a numerous body of the people dressed in white, they thus marched in solemn procession to an eminence called Sapha, which commanded a view of the temple and of the whole city. The king approached, but was so struck with profound awe, at the extraordinary spectacle, that instead of indulging in revenge, he hastened forward and saluted the man of God with religious veneration. All stood amazed at his singular behaviour; and Parmenio, a favourite of the king, asked the reason of this act of unexpected homage. To this Alexander is said to have replied, that the worship was not offered to the priest, but to his God; in grateful acknowledgment for a vision at Dio, in Macedonia; in which this very priest, and in this very habit, appeared to him, promising to give him the empire of Persia.

Having cordially embraced Jaddua, it is said that Alexander entered Jerusalem, and offered up sacrifices in the temple. The high-priest showed him the prophecies of Daniel, which foretold the subversion of the Persian empire by a Grecian king: by reading these, Alexander went against Darius with still greater confidence of success in his expedition; and, at the request of Jaddua, granted the Jews the free exercise of their religion, the observance of their laws, and exemption from the payment of tribute every se-

venth year, in which the law required that they should neither reap nor sow. Alexander defeated the immense army of Darius, and the predictions of Daniel were accomplished in his overthrow of the Persians, Dan. ii. 39. viii. 2. 5. 7. 20, 21. x. 20. xi. 2—4.

The conqueror greatly favoured the Jews, and Egypt having submitted to his power, he built Alexandria, and induced multitudes of that people to settle in the new city, granting them equal privileges with the Macedonians. This mighty conqueror died, aged only thirty-two years, B.C. 323; all his family were murdered, and four of his generals divided among themselves the vast dominions of their royal master.

Egypt fell to the lot of Ptolemy Lagus, who invaded Judea, and led a hundred thousand of its people captives into his country: but treating them liberally, many were glad to follow their brethren, on account of the miserable condition into which wars had plunged their native land.

In the year B.C. 292, Simon, surnamed the just, high-priest of the Jews, died. He was a man of singular wisdom and virtue, and the last of the men of the great synagogue, consisting of one hundred and twenty persons, appointed by Ezra for perfecting the restoration of the Jewish church. Simon the just, it is considered, made the last revision of the books of the Old Testament, and completed the sacred canon by adding the books of Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, and Malachi.

The Jews in Egypt forgetting the Hebrew language, procured the sacred books to be translated into Greek for their use, and a copy of them was placed in the royal library of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about the year B.C. 284. This translation of the

scriptures into Greek, which is called the septuagint, became commonly used in all the churches of the Jews wherever they were dispersed. "This version, therefore," as Rollin observes, "which renders the scriptures of the Old Testament intelligible to a vast number of people, became one of the most considerable fruits of the Grecian conquests. In this manner did God prepare the way for the preaching of the gospel, which was then approaching, and facilitate the union of so many nations, of different languages and manners, into one society, and the same worship and doctrines, by the instrumentality of the finest, most copious, and correct language that was ever spoken in the world, and which became common to all the countries that were conquered by Alexander."

For more than a century, Judea suffered grievously in the continual wars of Alexander's successors; especially from Antiochus, surnamed by himself Epiphanes, the illustrious, but by others, Epimanes, the madman. He deposed Onias, the pious high-priest of the Jews, and sold the sacred office, for an annual tribute of 360 talents, to his brother Jason. Him he soon deposed, and again sold it to his brother Menelaus for 660 talents. On a false report that Epiphanes was dead, Jason attempted to recover the priesthood; with a thousand soldiers he entered Jerusalem, and by the sword, and with various torments, he put to death all whom he considered his adversaries. Antiochus having heard that the Jews rejoiced at his death, and supposing that all the nation had revolted, took Jerusalem by storm, the year B.C. 170: he slew 40,000 persons, and sold as many more for slaves; and plundered the temple of its splendid furniture to *the amount* of 800 talents of gold. In contempt of

the God of Israel, he entered the holy of holies, and sacrificed a sow upon the altar of burnt offering. Antiochus then returned to Antioch, laden with the riches of his spoils, appointing Philip, a barbarous Phrygian, governor of Judea; Andronicus, a wicked wretch, to preside in Samaria; and the unprincipled Menelaus to the high priesthood.

In his fourth expedition to Egypt, ambassadors from the Roman people arrived, and threatened him with the vengeance of their victorious legions unless he withdrew his forces. Infuriated to madness by their authoritative interference, he led back his army through Palestine, and despatched Apollonius with twenty thousand of his soldiers, with orders to destroy Jerusalem, to put to the sword all the men, and to make slaves of all the women and children. These commands were executed with savage fierceness on the sabbath day, when the people were assembled for public worship; and none escaped but those who could reach the mountains by flight, or who concealed themselves in caverns of the earth. The city was spoiled of its riches by these impious invaders, and set on fire in several places: they broke down its walls and demolished the houses, and with the materials they erected a strong fortress on mount Acra; which, overlooking the temple, the garrison were ready to sally forth and murder those who dared to approach it as worshippers.

On his arrival at Antioch, Antiochus published a decree, requiring all people in his dominions to conform to the religion of the Greeks; and Atheneus was commissioned to instruct the Jews in the Grecian idolatrous ceremonies, and to put to death with the most grievous torments, those who refused compli-

ance with his commands. Arriving at Jerusalem, he obtained the co-operation of some apostate Jews: he put down the daily sacrifice, suppressed all the public and private observances of the Jewish religion, defiled the temple of God itself, and rendered that edifice unfit for sacred worship. He also sought out every copy of the scriptures, and burnt all that could be found; he dedicated the temple of Jehovah to Jupiter Olympus, erected his statue on the altar of burnt offering, and punished with death all that could be found who had acted contrary to the decree of their sovereign.

Mattathias, a venerable priest of the Asmonean family, with his five sons, John, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan, retired from the persecution at Jerusalem to their native city Modin, in the tribe of Dan. They were followed by Apelles, an officer of the king, who strove to compel them to observe the commands of Antiochus. The people being called together, Apelles addressed Mattathias to engage his compliance with the idol worship, promising him a reward of great honour and riches. The aged priest not only rejected his offers, but slew the first apostate Jew who approached the idolatrous altar. He also rose upon the king's agent, and, with the assistance of his sons, put him to death with all his attendants, demolished the idols and their altars, and then withdrew to the mountains. Being joined by a number of his faithful countrymen, he marched through Judea; broke down the heathen altars in all the cities; restored circumcision; cut off the ministers of the idols, and those Jews who had apostatized to their abominations, and re-established the *true* worship of God, B.C. 167. Mattathias died the

next year, appointing his son Judas, surnamed Maccabeus, to succeed him in the command of the army, which was soon joined by many who were zealous for the law of God. He defeated several large armies of Antiochus under his bravest commanders, recovered Jerusalem, purified the temple, restored the appointed worship of God, and repaired the city, which had been almost a heap of ruins, B.C. 165. Transported with rage at the defeat of his generals, Antiochus threatened to exterminate the whole nation of the Jews, and make Jerusalem their common burial place: but while these proud words were passing over his lips, the judgment of Heaven fell upon him; he was smitten with an incurable disease, with grievous torments in his bowels, and an intolerable ulcer, breeding vermin, by which his guilty life was terminated, B.C. 164. His son Eupator, under Lysias his general, engaged the neighbouring nations to unite in destroying the whole race of the Jews; but Judas, hearing of the alliance, carried the war into the countries of his enemies, and became a terrible scourge to the Syrians, Idumeans, and Arabians. Judas died in battle, B.C. 161, and was succeeded by his brother Jonathan; who, with Simon his brother, continued to manage the affairs of his people with singular bravery and prudence.

Onias, the high-priest, having settled in Egypt, Jonathan assumed the sacerdotal office at Jerusalem, uniting it with the honour of civil governor, and formed an alliance with the Romans, B.C. 161. Jonathan being slain at Ptolemais, by the treachery of Tryphon, who had usurped the throne of Syria, Simon was chosen to succeed him, B.C. 144; and after a reformation at Jerusalem, he rendered the Jews independent of foreign nations. Having made

a tour through the cities of Judea, for the purpose of promoting their peace and order, his son-in-law Ptolemy entertained him in his castle Dochus, at Jericho, and murdered him, with his sons Judas and Mattathias, B.C. 135.

Simon was succeeded in the government and priesthood by his son John Hyrcanus, who extended his authority to several adjacent provinces; he destroyed the Samaritan temple on mount Gerizim, B.C. 130, after it had stood two hundred years, and compelled the Idumeans to embrace the Jewish religion. He renewed the alliance with the Romans, by which he secured considerable advantages for his nation, and died, B.C. 107, leaving the sovereignty and priesthood to his son Aristobulus. This prince raised Judea again into a monarchy, and was the first after the captivity who assumed to himself the title of king. He was succeeded by his son Alexander Janneus, who compelled the Philistines to embrace the profession of the Jewish faith, B.C. 97. He reigned twenty-seven years, and died through intemperance, B.C. 79.

The Roman alliance was found to be prejudicial to the interests of the Jews, who suffered much through the civil discords of Rome. The royal and pontifical dignity became a subject of violent contention, and the assistance of the Romans being called in by Aristobulus, against his elder brother Hyrcanus, Pompey seated Hyrcanus on the throne, but made Judea a tributary province of the Roman empire, B.C. 63. Pompey, with some of his officers, impiously entered the holy of holies; and Crassus, governor of Syria, pillaged the temple of ten thousand talents of silver, B.C. 54.

Soon after, Antipater, a crafty nobleman of Idu-

mea, by favour of Julius Cæsar, was made procurator of Judea, B.C. 47. while Hyrcanus retained the priesthood. Antipater was succeeded by his son Herod the great; who, being assisted by Antony, the Roman triumvir, through much bloodshed, obtained the royal dignity, B.C. 40. His authority was confirmed by Augustus Cæsar, B.C. 30, and he maintained his dignity with distinguished ability, but also with most atrocious cruelty. During his long reign he built many cities; and to ingratiate himself with the Jews, he almost rebuilt their temple, Mark xiii. 1. John ii. 20. His inhuman barbarity towards the children of Bethlehem, in attempting to murder the infant Jesus, is recorded by the evangelist Matthew. Herod died soon afterwards, suffering the most dreadful torments. Under the government of his sons, Judea became more fully recognised as a Roman province; Shiloh came, and the sceptre departed from Judah, Gen. xlix. 10. the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile was broken down, Eph. ii. 14. the dispensation of sovereign mercy to all nations was introduced; and after being under the government of Roman procurators for some years, the whole Jewish state, with its ceremonial and temple, was altogether subverted, A.D. 70, by Titus, the son of the emperor Vespasian, and the people scattered throughout the world, as living monuments of the truth of christianity.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE principal countries mentioned in the Old Testament, except Egypt, are situated on the western border of the Asiatic continent. In that quarter

formed the Assyrian, Babylonian, and P
the Grecian and Roman empires in Asia,
attest the multitude and riches of its a
habitants, and corroborate the astonishin
transmitted to us by different ancient hist

Paradise, or the garden of Eden, is s
have been situated in Armenia, near the
river Euphrates. The country called Pa
the land of Judea; Syria, including Phœ
Minor, now called Natolia; Mesopota
termed Diarbeck; Chaldea; Assyria, a
constitute the principal countries noticed
Testament scriptures, and are all in Asia
which is on the north-east coast of Afric
rated from Asia only by a narrow nec
called the Isthmus of Suez, and the Red
called the Arabian Gulf.

Asia is celebrated as being far superio
or even Europe, both in the salubrious
its air, and the rich fertility of its soil, pro

written—where our Lord Jesus Christ accomplished the all-important work of human redemption—and where the apostles of the Saviour were supernaturally qualified to go forth among all nations, to preach the gospel of eternal salvation, bringing sinners of every tribe into the kingdom of Messiah.

Canaan was so named from Canaan the son of Ham, the son of Noah. It lay between the Mediterranean Sea and the mountains of Arabia, extending from Egypt on the south to Phœnicia on the north. It was bounded on the east by Arabia Deserta; on the south by Arabia Petræa, Idumea, and Egypt; on the west by the Mediterranean, called in Scripture The Great Sea; and on the north by the Mountains of Lebanon in Syria. Its length from the city of Dan, which stood at the foot of those mountains, to Beersheba, which was situated at the southern extremity of the land, is about two hundred miles; and its breadth, from the shores of the Mediterranean to the eastern border, is about ninety miles. This country is known to us by several significant names besides that of Canaan: it is called The Land of Promise, from the fact of its having been promised to Abraham and his family: Palestine, from the Philistines: Judea, from the tribe of Judah possessing its most fertile division. It is frequently called The Holy Land, from the circumstances recorded in the Holy Scriptures, especially as the ministry of Christ was exercised in that country; and as there the obedience, and death, and resurrection of Christ took place for our eternal salvation.

Geography of the New Testament.

The geography of the New Testament extends little beyond the countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea, or *Great Sea*. The only seas which are spoken of in the New Testament are, *the Sea of Galilee*, called *the Sea of Tiberias*, which is the Lake of Gennesaret; *the Red Sea*, and parts of the Mediterranean. At the period of our Saviour's ministry, almost all the countries mentioned in the New Testament were included in the Roman empire, or were subject to the Romans. The journeyings of our Lord were limited to the land of Israel. This country, on the western side of Jordan, was divided into three provinces; *Judea* in the south, *Samaria* in the middle, and *Galilee* in the north. *Beyond Jordan*, on the eastern side, the country was called Perea; in which were situated Decapolis, including ten cities, John i. 28. Mark vii. 31. The missionary labours of St. Paul were chiefly confined to Palestine, Syria, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy; though it is believed by many that he visited Spain, Gaul or France, and even Britain. The countries of *Asia Minor*, mentioned in the New Testament, were Mysia, Lydia, Caria, Troas, Bithynia, Pontus, Asia, Galatia, Phrygia, Lycaonia, Cappadocia, Lycia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia. The *Roman, Proconsular* Asia, embraced the western part, comprehending Mysia, Lydia, and Caria, in whose cities, of which Ephesus was the chief, the seven churches were planted, Rev. i.

Hebrew Offices.

1. The patriarchs were the fathers who lived in the early ages of the world, and who became famous

on account of their long lives, and their descendants. Adam, Seth, Enoch, &c. were eminent before the deluge: Noah and his sons after that event. Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and his sons, are the other most celebrated patriarchs of the Old Testament; they were the founders of mighty families. The patriarchs exercised a kind of sovereign authority in their respective households, being both priests and princes. In Job and Abraham we see excellent examples of the patriarchal government.

2. The prophets were illustrious persons who were divinely raised up among the Israelites, to be the extraordinary ministers of the dispensations of God. They flourished in a continued succession during a period of more than a thousand years, reckoning from Moses to Malachi; all co-operating in the same designs, uniting in one spirit to deliver the same doctrines, and to predict the same blessings to mankind.

3. The priests were those persons who were set apart to offer sacrifices to God, and make intercession with him for the people. Before the call of Aaron, patriarchs, elder brothers, and princes, or every man for himself, offered sacrifice; as is evident from the history of Cain, Abel, Noah, Job, and Abraham. Among the Israelites, after their departure from Egypt, the priesthood was confined to one tribe, and it consisted of three orders—the high-priests, common priests, and Levites.

The high-priest was the first character among the Israelites, as he was the medium of communion with God. The priesthood was hereditary in the family of Aaron, and the first-born of the oldest branch of it, if he had no legal blemish, was always the high-

priest. He was consecrated with solemn pomp, and officiated at the daily sacrifice in splendid robes; especially on the day of atonement, on which occasion he wore the precious breastplate, with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel engraven on gems, set in it, that he might be admonished to bear on his heart the whole community, for whom the sacred ornament was a memorial before the Lord. In his appointment to his office, and in his consecration, sacrifice, and intercession for the people, the high-priest was an eminent type of Jesus Christ, Exod. xxviii. xxix. Lev. xvi. Heb. iii. v. vii. viii. ix. x.

The priests were also of the family of Aaron: they were the ordinary ministers of religion, and their duty was to offer the daily and other sacrifices, under the direction of the high-priest; to conduct all the various services of the tabernacle; to manage all the religious ceremonies of the people, and to instruct them in the law of God. They were divided into twenty-four ranks, each rank serving weekly in the temple.

The high-priest prefigured our Lord Jesus Christ, in his mediation with God by atonement and intercession. The ministers of the gospel were represented by the ordinary priests.

4. The Levites were the descendants of Levi, but not of the family of Aaron: they were a lower order of ecclesiastical persons, inferior to the priests, and their assistants in the inferior part of the sacred service. The Levites correspond to deacons under the gospel. In this subordinate capacity were all the posterity of Moses; affording a proof that he was not influenced by ambition, but acted by the Divine direction. The Levites applied themselves to the

study of the law, and they were dispersed through the country as the ordinary teachers, magistrates, and judges of the people. They had no landed property except forty-eight cities; for God was their inheritance, and he appointed the tithes of the produce of the land, as a reward for their services among the people, Num. xviii. 20—32. xxxv. 1—8.

5. The Nethinims, from the Hebrew word Nathan, "to give," were servants, who had been given up to the service of the tabernacle and temple, at which they officiated, in the more laborious duties of carrying wood and water. They were the Canaanites whose lives were spared, Joshua ix. Ezra viii. 20.

6. Nazarites were persons devoted to the peculiar service of God, for a week, a month, a year, or for life. Samson and John the Baptist were Nazarites by birth; others were voluntary, Num. vi. Acts xviii. 18. xxi. 21—26. The Rechabites were of this class of persons, Jer. xxxv.

7. The Scribes among the Israelites were writers of the law; persons who addicted themselves to literary pursuits. They were a class of lawyers by profession: at first they were only the copiers of the law, or secretaries to the government; but from transcribers of the sacred writings, they assumed the office of its expounders, till in the time of our Saviour, their commentaries had, in many things, superseded the Word of God.

HEBREW FESTIVALS.

THE Israelites had two different periods, from which they began the computation of their year;—one for civil purposes, the other for the regulation of

their religious festivals. The sacred year commenced in the month Abib, which corresponds with our March; because in that month the Israelites were emancipated from their slavery in Egypt: the civil year began in the month Tisri, answering to our September. The Hebrew mode of reckoning months was not as ours, but strictly lunar: they, therefore, cannot be reduced to correspond exactly with ours, as they consisted of 29 and 30 days alternately. To make their year equal to the solar, the Jews took care every three years to add a month to Adar, and called it Ve-Adar or second Adar.

The natural day the Israelites distinguished from the civil: the civil day was from the rising to the setting of the sun; and the natural day was of 24 hours, reckoning from one sun setting to another. The night was divided into four watches, each watch containing the space of about three hours.

1. The Sabbath was the first and most important of the sacred festivals. The seventh day was so denominated from a Hebrew word signifying rest, because in it God had rested from his works of creation. From the beginning of the world it had been set apart for religious services; and by a special injunction it was afterwards observed by the Hebrews as a holy day. They were commanded to sanctify it for sacred purposes, in honour of God as their Creator, and likewise as a memorial of their redemption from slavery in Egypt.

2. The Daily Sacrifice. The sacrifices of the Hebrews were exceedingly numerous: bullocks, sheep, goats, pigeons, and turtle-doves, were the animals used by appointment of God for this purpose. "There were four sorts of sacrifices, as one

alone was not sufficient to represent the adorable sacrifice of Jesus Christ."—*Abbé Fleury*. The sacrifices were of two general kinds; 1. Such as were offered in the way of atonement for sin; 2. Such as were designed to express gratitude to God for his mercies and blessings.

The daily sacrifice was very remarkable: it was a lamb without blemish, offered to God by fire, as an atonement for sin; one in the morning daily throughout the year, for the sins of the nation during the night, and another in the evening for their sins during the day. Before the act of sacrificing, the devoted victim had the sins of the whole nation confessed over it, by the officiating priest, and the guilt ceremonially transferred to the animal, by the representatives of the people laying their hands upon its head. It was then slain, and offered as a burnt-offering for them: meanwhile the congregation worshipped in the court, and the priests burnt incense on the golden altars, making supplication for the people. On the sabbath the sacrifice was double, two lambs being offered at each service, Exod. xxix. 38—42. Lev. vi. 9. Num. xxviii. 3—9.

3. The day of Atonement was distinguished with the most solemn annual sacrifice; at which, after the priest had offered a bullock, as an atonement for the sins of himself and his family, two goats were offered as an atonement for the nation. The manner of the sacrifice was affecting and instructive. After the sins of the nation had been confessed over their heads by the high-priest, one was slain and offered by fire, after the manner of the daily sacrifice: the other was taken, bearing the sins of the people, into the wilderness, to be seen no more, Lev. xvi.

4. The New Moons were observed with much solemn festivity; for which sacrifices were appointed, and the rejoicings were attended with the sounding of the silver trumpets by the priests, Num. x. 10. xxviii. 11—15.

The annual festivals were three, at which all the males of the nation, above twelve years of age, were required to present themselves before the Lord at his sanctuary, Deut. xvi. 16.

5. The Passover was the first of the annual Jewish festivals: it was instituted to commemorate the wonderful preservation of the Hebrews, on the night of their deliverance from slavery, when the destroying angel slew the first-born of every Egyptian family, passing over the houses of the Israelites, their door-posts having been sprinkled with the blood of the paschal lamb, which was sacrificed in the evening. That night was the termination of the four hundred and thirty years of the sojourning of the Hebrews, from the time of Abraham, Gen. xv. 13, 14. Exod. xii. 41, 42. It was the fourteenth day of the month Abib, answering to the beginning of our April; and which, from that event, became the chief of their months, and the commencement of their ecclesiastical year, which had not been before that time distinguished from the civil, Exod. xii. 2—18. xxiii. 15.

The passover was typical of our Saviour, and hence the apostle says, "Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us," 1 Cor. v. 7. The spotless purity of his heart and life was prefigured by the paschal lamb, being without blemish. Christians are, therefore, redeemed not with "silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot," 1 Pet. i. 18, 19. As the Israelites

were passed over and delivered by the shedding of the blood, and feeding upon the flesh of the paschal lamb,—so the salvation of christians is enjoyed by feeding, in faith, upon the flesh and blood of Christ, John vi. 52—62.

6. Pentecost is a Greek word signifying the fiftieth; this festival was so called because it was celebrated the fiftieth day after the second day of the passover. The feast of Pentecost was instituted to commemorate the giving of the law at Sinai, it being received fifty days after the deliverance from Egypt. It was called, also, the Feast of Harvest, as it was held at the close of the wheat harvest, the first fruits of which, in two loaves of fine flour, were presented to the Lord, with sacrifices, thanksgiving, and rejoicing. The public sacrifice was seven lambs of that year, one calf, and two rams for a burnt-offering; two lambs for a peace-offering, and a goat for a sin-offering, Lev. xxiii. 15—17.

It is worthy of observation, that this feast happened on the Lord's day that year in which our Saviour was crucified, when the apostles were miraculously endowed by the Holy Spirit to qualify them for establishing the kingdom of Christ, and when three thousand were at one time brought into his church.

7. The Feast of Tabernacles was held at the close of the whole harvest and vintage, Deut. xvi. 13. to acknowledge the bounty of God, in crowning the year with his blessings. It was designed to commemorate the goodness of God in protecting the Israelites in the wilderness: for which purpose during this feast they dwelt in booths formed of the boughs of trees, and in these they continued seven days, to remind them of their forefathers sojourning in the desert. The Feast of Tabernacles commenced on the

fifteenth day of Tisri, which was the first month of the civil year, on the first of which a festival was held called the Feast of Trumpets, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, or of triumph and shouting for joy. It began the year; the tenth was the Day of Atonement, Lev. xxiii. 27. 34—43. Deut. xvi. 13—15.

8. The Sabbatical Year, the Jubilee or Year of Release, was every seventh year. As the sabbath day signified that the people were the Lord's, for which reason they abstained from their own work to do the work of the Lord; so the sabbatical year was intended to remind them that both they and their land belonged to the Lord. The observation of this festival consisted principally in two things. 1. In not tilling the ground or pruning the vine; whence the land was said to keep a Sabbath, Lev. xxv. 6. 2. In discharging all debtors and releasing all debts; from which it was called the Lord's Release, Deut. xv. 2—9. To remove all the fears of the timid, God promised to command his blessing upon the sixth year, that the land should bring forth the fruit of three years, Lev. xxv. 20—22. Religious instruction was to be particularly communicated to the servants and to the poor in this year of release, that the knowledge and fear of God might be preserved among the people, Deut. xxxi. 10—13.

9. The Great Jubilee, or Grand Sabbatical Year, was appointed to be held every fiftieth year, at the end of seven of the smaller jubilees. This was a year of general release, not only of all debts, but of all slaves and prisoners, and of all lands and possessions, whether they had been sold or mortgaged. This joyful period was announced in the evening after the solemn services of the day of atonement. *This* time was most wisely appointed; as the rich

and the injured would be better prepared to remit the debts of their brethren, when they themselves had been imploring forgiveness of God; and when peace was made with God, by the sacrifices of atonement, it was peculiarly suitable to proclaim liberty and rejoicing throughout the country. The design of this institution was both political and typical. The jubilee was political, intended to prevent the oppression of the poor, as well as their being liable to perpetual slavery. By this means, the rich were prevented from getting the whole of the landed property into their own possession, and a kind of equality was maintained in all their families. By this means also, the distinction of tribes was preserved, in respect both of their estates and families, and it was thus correctly ascertained from what tribe and family the Messiah descended.

The jubilee had a typical design, to which the prophet Isaiah refers in predicting the character and office of Messiah, lxi. 1, 2. Luke iv. 17—21. The various terms which the prophet employs alluded to the blessings of the jubilee, but its full sense refers to the richer blessings of the gospel, which proclaims spiritual release from the bondage of sin and Satan, liberty of returning to our heavenly inheritance by Jesus Christ, and the privilege of being enriched with the treasures of his grace on earth, preparatory to the enjoyment of the celestial glory.

JEWISH SECTS.

ON the restoration of the Jewish church, after the Babylonish captivity, there arose two parties among them, who manifested a regard for religion. One of

them adhered to the scriptures only, rejecting all human traditions. Professing to observe the whole law they assumed the name Zadikim, the righteous. From these proceeded the Samaritans and the Sadducees. The other party, besides the inspired scriptures, superadded the traditions of the elders; and from a supposed superior degree of sanctity were called Chasidim, the pious. From these arose the Pharisees and Essenes.

1. The Samaritans were originally the idolatrous successors of the ten tribes, part of whom the king of Assyria sent to unite with the scattered few in repeopling Samaria and the land of Israel. At first, as a punishment for their idolatry, they were plagued with lions; but on this being reported to the king, a priest was sent from among the captives, to instruct them in the law of God. "So they feared the LORD, and made unto themselves of the lowest of them priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence," 2 Kings xvii. 24—33.

Afterwards they became partially reformed, admitted the writings of Moses, built a temple on mount Gerizim, and worshipped the God of Israel. From the conversation of the woman of Sychar, we learn that even the more corrupt class had some knowledge of the Messiah, and expected his appearance, John iv. 25.

2. The Sadducees were a kind of deists. They received their appellation from Sadoc their founder, who lived B.C. 280 years. At first they rejected only the traditions of the elders, as being destitute of divine authority, but afterwards they adopted many impious *notions* like those of Epicurus, a heathen philosopher,

and rejected the whole of the sacred writings except the five books of Moses. They denied the resurrection of the dead, the existence of angels, and the immortality of the soul. They admitted the being and providence of Almighty God; but they rejected the doctrine of rewards and punishments in a future state. Josephus, the Jewish historian, observes, "Whenever they sat in judgment upon criminals, they always were for the severest sentence against them." He also says, "Their number was the fewest of all the sects of the Jews: but they were only those of the best quality, and of the greatest riches among them."

3. The Pharisees were the principal sect among the Jews; and though they were haughty despisers of the common people, the vulgar entertained such an opinion of their sanctity, that it became a common notion among them, that if only two persons were received into heaven one of them must be a pharisee. The greater part of the doctors of the law and the scribes were of this party. They esteemed the traditions of the wise men as of nearly equal authority with the word of God, and generally gave them the preference. They were intolerably proud of their religious attainments; supposing themselves to merit the divine favour by their duties and observances. On these accounts they were justly characterised by our Lord as grossly hypocritical, and at a greater distance from the kingdom of God than even publicans and harlots.

4. The Essenes were a rigid sect of the Jews, a branch of the pharisees; but they entered upon a more mortified way of living, and were probably more free from hypocrisy. Though our Saviour often censured the other sects, we have no account of his mentioning them; nor are they noticed specifically by the

writers of the New Testament. This has been accounted for by their living in solitary places, somewhat in the manner of the Romish monks, and from their seldom coming to the temple or into public assemblies. Many suppose that John the Baptist lived among them. They believed in a future state of happiness, but doubted of the resurrection. They mostly disallowed marriage, adopting the children of the poor to train up in their principles. Candidates for communion with them were in probation for three years, and when fully admitted, they were required to bind themselves to worship God, to practise justice, to conceal none of their mysteries from any of the society, and to communicate them to no other, even to save their lives. They despised riches, and held their property common; they were remarkably abstemious, ate at a common table, and were extremely plain in their apparel.

5. The Scribes among the Jews were not a particular sect, but transcribers of the sacred books; also persons who addicted themselves to literary pursuits: they were interpreters of the law and instructors of the people.

6. The Herodians were not so much a religious sect as a political party. They complied with many heathen practises to ingratiate themselves with Herod and his patrons the Romans.

7. The Galileans, or Gaulonites, appear to have been a turbulent political party among the Jews, rather than a religious sect. Their first leader was Judas, the Galilean, Acts v. 37.

8. The Libertines, Acts vi. 9. were such Jews or proselytes as were free citizens of Rome, having a synagogue in Jerusalem peculiar to themselves.

Heresies and Sects mentioned in the New Testament.

It will be evident to every reader of the New Testament, that during the apostolic age many pernicious heresies infested the infant churches. Some of them were introduced by judaizing teachers, who wished to incorporate the Levitical ceremonies with the simplicity of the gospel. Others arose from a false philosophy which was borrowed from the heathen, and which the apostle denounces as vain deceit, Col. ii. 8.

1. The Nicolaitanes have been supposed to have had Nicolas, one of the seven deacons, for their leader in false doctrine and immorality: but this seems contrary to his character, as declared by the evangelists, Acts vi. and we have no evidence that Nicolas, the deacon, ever departed from the faith of the gospel. These corrupters of religion were a kind of practical antinomians; they allowed themselves to participate in the sacrifices of the idolaters, and indulged in the vilest impurities, to the scandal of their profession, and to the destruction of their souls.

2. The Antichrists mentioned by the apostle, 1 John ii. 18. were certain heretical teachers, whose principles contradicted the true doctrines of the gospel. They were called Ebionites, from one Ebion; Cerinthians, from one Cerinthus; and Gnostics, from gnosis, a Greek word signifying knowledge. Simon Magus, Acts viii. 9—24. is said to have been the parent of these heresies. It is difficult to ascertain precisely what doctrines these heretics taught; some making a distinction between Jesus and the Christ; some denying the divine nature of our Lord, and others

his humanity; some rejecting his vicarious atonement, and all disregarding his holy precepts. To refute and destroy their pernicious absurdities, the apostle John was inspired to write his gospel and epistles, testifying the proper Godhead, the real manhood, and the propitiatory sacrifice of our Lord and Saviour. John i. 1—3. 14. 1 John i. 1, 2. ii. 18—24. iii. 1. 3. 9, 10.

3. The Stoics, Acts xvii. 18. were pagan philosophers, the founder of whose sect was Zeno, who flourished about 350 years before the christian era. They affected a perfect indifference to both pleasure and pain, professing to believe that all things are governed by an irresistible necessity called fate, which was superior to the will of all their gods.

4. The Epicureans were another sect of philosophers, who were the disciples of Epicurus, an Athenian, who flourished about 300 years before the christian era. They taught principles the very opposite to the Stoics; they ascribed all things to chance, and considered pleasure as the chief good.

MONEYS, WEIGHTS, AND MEASURES OF THE SCRIPTURES.

THE several moneys, weights, and measures mentioned by the sacred writers, were not all of Hebrew origin. Some of them were Greek, and others Roman, as these people in succession conquered the east; for with their government they introduced their coins and methods of policy. There is considerable difficulty in making accurate calculations respecting both coins and measures; and learned men differ in several particulars relating to them. The following

tables have been prepared from the most judicious writers on the subject.

I. MONEY.

	£	s.	d.	qr.
Copper Coin.				
1. Mite, Mark xii. 42. it weighed half a barley-corn, and was in value about $\frac{3}{8}$ of a farthing English	0	0	0	$0\frac{3}{8}$
2. Farthing, or quadrans, two mites, or about $\frac{3}{4}$ of our farthing	0	0	0	$0\frac{3}{4}$
3. Assyrium, or ass, Matt. x. 29. the tenth part of a Roman penny, or about three farthings English	0	0	0	3
Silver Money.				
1. Gerah. Exod. xxx. 13. about	0	0	1	2
2. Penny, denarius, or drachma, Matt. xx. 2. the fourth part of a shekel	0	0	7	2
3. Bekah, Exod. xxxviii. 6. half a shekel	0	1	3	0
4. Shekel, Exod. xxx. 13. or silverling. Isa. vii. or stater, Matt. xvii. 27. was stamped on one side with Aaron's rod, and on the other with the pot of manna	0	2	6	0
5. Maneh, mina, or pound, Luke xix. 13. fifty shekels	6	5	2	0
6. Talent, sixty manehs or pounds	375	0	0	0
Gold Money.				
1. Shekel of gold, about fourteen times the value of silver	1	16	0	0
2. Talent of gold, 3000 shekels	5475	0	0	0

II. WEIGHTS.

	lbs.	oz.	dwts.	grs.
1. Gerah, about	0	0	0	12
2. Bekah, ten gerahs	0	0	5	0
3. Shekel, two bekahs	0	0	10	0
4. Mina, sixty shekels	2	6	0	0
5. Talent, fifty minas	125	0	0	0

III. MEASURES.

Measures of Length.

	yds.	ft.	in.
1. Finger, Jer. lii. 21. the breadth of a man's thumb, about	0	0	0⅞
2. Handbreadth, Exod. xxv. 25. four fingers	0	0	3½
3. Span, Exod. xxviii. 16. three handbreadths	0	0	10½
4. Cubit, Gen. vi. 15. two spans	0	1	9
5. Fathom, Acts xxvii. 28. four cubits	2	1	0
6. Reed, Ezek. xl. 3—5. nearly eleven feet, or	3	2	0
7. Line, Ezek. xl. 3. eighty cubits, or	46	2	0
8. Furlong, or stadium, Luke xxiv. 13. a Greek measure	233	0	0
9. Mile, Matt. v. 41. eight furlongs	1866	0	0
10. Sabbath day's journey, Acts i. 12. a mile: some say two miles.			

Liquid Measures.

	gals.	qts.	pts.
1. Log, Lev. xiv. 10. equal to six egg-shells full	0	0	0¾
2. Hin, Exod. xxix. 4	1	1	0
3. Bath, 1 Kings vii. 26. or firkin, John ii. 6. six hins	7	2	0
4. Cor, or homer, Ezek. xlv. 14. Isa. v. 10. the largest measure	75	0	0

Dry Measures.

	gals.	qts.	pts.
1. Pot, or sextarius, Mark vii. 4	0	0	1½
2. Cab, 2 Kings vi. 25. or chenix, Rev. vi. 6. the measure of corn allowed to a slave for the food of a day	0	1	0
3. Omer, Exod. xvi. 36. or tenth-deal, ch. xxix. 4. about	0	1	1
4. Seah, Matt. xiii. 33. about	2	0	0
5. *Ephah,* or bath, Ezek. xlv. 11. about	6	0	0
6. *Homer,* Numb. xi. 32. Hosea iii. 2	16	0	0

CHRONOLOGICAL INDEX TO THE BIBLE. Referring to the principal Events recorded in the Holy Scriptures, and including a Period of 4104 years.

The true date of the birth of Christ is *four years* earlier than the common era, A.D. There are some differences in the calculations of learned men respecting the dates of the events in the two first periods or ages or the world, but not such as in any manner to affect the truth of scripture.

PERIOD OR AGE I.

From the Creation to the Deluge, containing 1656 *years.*

A.M.	B.C.		
	4004	The creation of the world....	Gen. i. ii.
1	4003	Fall of our first parents, Adam and Eve.....	iii.
2	4002	Cain born	iv. 1.
3	4003	Abel born	2.
129	3875	Abel murdered by his brother Cain.....	8.
130	3874	Seth born, Adam, his father being 130 years old	v. 3.
622	3382	Enoch born.....	18, 19.
687	3317	Methuselah born	21.
930	3074	Adam dies, aged 930 years..	25.
987	3017	Enoch translated, aged 365 years	24.
1042	2962	Seth dies, aged 912 years ...	8.
1056	2948	Noah born.....	28, 29.
1536	2468	The deluge threatened, and Noah commissioned to preach repentance during 120 years.....	vi. 3. 22. 1 Pet. iii. 20. 2 Pet. ii. 5.
1656	2348	Methuselah dies, aged 969 years	Gen. v. 27, 28.
		In the same year Noah enters the ark, he being 600 years old.....	vii. 6, 7.

PERIOD OR AGE II.

From the Deluge to the call of Abraham, containing

A.M.	B.C.		
1657	2347	Noah, with his family, leaves the ark after the deluge, and sacrificing, he receives the covenant of safety, of which the rainbow was the token	Gen. vi i
1770	2234	Babel built, the confusion of languages, and the dispersion of mankind	x
1771	2233	Nimrod lays the first foundation of the Babylonian or Assyrian monarchy.....	
1816	2188	Mizraim, the son of Ham, the son of Noah, commences the foundation of the Egyptian monarchy,	
1824	2180	The trials of the patriarch Job, are by many placed about this time.	
2006	1998	Noah dies, aged 950 years...	i
2008	1996	Abram born	x

PERIOD OR AGE III.

From the call of Abraham to the exodus of Israel fro
430 years.

2083	1921	Abram called from Chaldean idolatry, in his 75th year..	Gen. x
2107	1897	The covenant of God with Abram, and his name changed to Abraham—circumcision instituted.—Lot delivered, and Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim destroyed by fire on account of their abominations.....	xvi
2108	*1896*	Isaac born, Abraham being 100 years old	x

A.M.	B.C.		
2133	1871	Abraham offers Isaac as a burnt sacrifice to God ..	Gen. xxii. Heb. xi. 17—19. James ii. 21.
2145	1859	Sarah, Abraham's wife, dies, aged 127 years	Gen. xxiii. 1.
2147	1857	Isaac marries Rebecca.....	xxiv.
2168	1836	Jacob and Esau born, Isaac being 60 years old	xxv. 26.
2182	1822	Abraham dies, aged 175 years	7, 8.
2244	1760	Jacob goes to his uncle Laban in Syria, and marries Rachel and Leah, his daughters ..	xxviii.
2259	1745	Joseph born, Jacob being 90 years old	xxx. 23. 24
2255	1739	Jacob returns to Canaan....	xxxi. xxxii.
2276	1728	Joseph sold by his brethren to be a slave	xxxvii.
2289	1715	Joseph explains the dreams of Pharaoh, and is made governor of Egypt.....	xli.
2298	1706	Joseph's brethren and father settle in Egypt.....	xliii. xlvi.
2315	1689	Jacob foretells the coming of Messiah, and dies in Egypt, aged 147 years	xlix.
2369	1635	Joseph dies, aged 110 years..	l.
2430	1574	Aaron born.....	Ex. vi. 20. vii. 7.
2433	1571	Moses born.....	ii. 1—10.
2473	1531	Moses flees into Midian.....	11—13.
2513	1491	Moses commissioned by God to deliver Israel.....	iii.

PERIOD OR AGE IV.

From the exodus of Israel from Egypt to the entrance into Canaan, 40 years.

2513	1491	Miraculous passage of the Israelites, & Pharaoh drowned	Exod. xiv. xv.
2514	1490	The law delivered on Sinai—the tabernacle erected	xix. xl.

A.M.	B.C.	
2552	1452	Miriam, sister of Moses, dies, aged 130 years ..... Num. xx. 1, 2.
		Aaron dies, aged 123 years .. 28, 29.
2553	1451	Moses dies, aged 120 years, Joshua ordained his successor. Deut. xxxiv.

PERIOD OR AGE V.

From the entrance of Israel into Canaan to the building of Solomon's Temple, 448 years.

A.M.		B.C.
2553	The Israelites pass the river Jordan, the manna ceases, and Jericho taken, Josh. i.—vi.....	1451
2561	Joshua dies, aged 110 years, Josh. xxix.....	1443
2849	Samuel born, 1 Sam. i. 19.....	1165
2888	Eli, the high-priest dies. Ark of God taken by the Philistines, 1 Sam. iv.....	1116
2909	Saul anointed king, 1 Sam. x. xi. 12—15.	1096
2919	David born.....	1085
2941	David anointed to be king, 1 Sam. xvi. 13. ...	1063
2942	David slays Goliath, 1 Sam. xvii. 49—51.	1063
2949	Saul is defeated in battle, and in despair kills himself. David acknowledged king of Judah, 1 Sam. xxxi.	1055
2956	Ishbosheth, king of Israel, treacherously slain, and the whole kingdom united under David, 2 Sam. i.....	1048
2957	Jerusalem taken from the Jebusites by David, and made the royal city, 2 Sam. v.....	1047
2969	David commits adultery with Bathsheba, and contrives that her husband Uriah may be killed in battle, 2 Sam. xi.....	1035
2970	David brought to repentance for his sin by Nathan the prophet, sent to him by the Lord, 2 Sam. xii.....	1034
2971	Solomon is born, 2 Sam. xii. 24.....	1033
2981	Absalom rebels against his father, and is slain by Joab, the king's general, 2 Sam. xv.—xviii..	1023
2989	David causes Solomon to be proclaimed king, 1 Kings i.....	1015
2990	David dies, aged 70 years, 1 Kings ii.....	1014

A.M.		B.C.
3000	Solomon's temple finished, after seven years, 1 Kings vi. vii	1004

PERIOD OR AGE VI.

From the building of Solomon's temple to the Babylonish captivity, 415 years.

3001	Solomon's temple dedicated, 1 Kings viii.	1003
3029	Solomon dies. The ten tribes revolt to Jeroboam. Jeroboam abolishes the worship of the Lord in Israel, and sets up a golden calf at each end of his kingdom to be adored. Great numbers of the priests and Israelites, on account of the idolatry, withdraw from his government and unite with Judah, 1 Kings xii. 1 Chron. xi. 13, 16.....	975
3033	Rehoboam abandons himself to impiety, so that the Lord permits Shishak, king of Egypt, to take Jerusalem, and pillage the king's palace and the consecrated temple, 1 Kings xiv. 25. 2 Chron. xii. 1. 9.....	971
3108	Elijah the prophet being translated to heaven, is succeeded by Elisha, 2 Kings ii.....	896
3165	Elisha dies, 2 Kings xiii.	839
3194	Uzziah, called also Azariah, begins to reign in Judah for 52 years; in whose time Isaiah and Amos prophesy in Judah, and Jonah and Hosea in Israel, 2 Kings xv. 1—5. 2 Chron. xxvi.	810
3278	Hezekiah endeavours to effect a complete reformation in the neglected services of religion, and establishes a society of scribes for circulation of the scriptures, 2 Kings xviii. 2 Chron. xxix.—xxxi. Prov. xxv.....	726
3283	The kingdom of Israel totally destroyed by the Assyrians, after it had subsisted apart from Judah, 254 years, under nineteen wicked kings, 2 Kings xvii.....	721
3292	Micah and Nahum prophesy.....	712
3308	Isaiah, as is believed, is sawn asunder by order of Manasseh, the wicked king of Judah, son of Hezekiah.....	696

A.M.		B.C.
3363	Zephaniah prophesies.....	641
3381	Joel prophesies.....	623
3395	Habakkuk prophesies.....	609
3398	Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem, makes the king tributary, and carries many captives to Babylon, among whom were Daniel and three companions, and Ezekiel the prophet, 2 Chron. xxxvi. Dan. i. 1, 2. Jer. xxix. 10. Ezek. i. The seventy years' captivity, as foretold by Jeremiah, begins, Jer. xxv. 12. xxix. 10....	606
3399	Jeremiah begins to commit his prophecies to writing.....	605
3410	Ezekiel begins to prophesy in Chaldea, Ezek. i. 1, 2.....	594
3416	Jerusalem with its temple burnt, after a long siege by Nebuchadnezzar; and the Jews, except a few of the poorest, carried captives to Babylon. The kingdom of Judah had subsisted 468 years, from David's accession to the throne; 338 from the separation of the ten tribes, and 134 from the ruin of the kingdom of Israel, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 14. 21.	588

PERIOD OR AGE VII.

From the Babylonish destruction of Jerusalem to the birth of Christ, 588 years.

3416	The first destruction of Jerusalem.....	588
3417	Jeremiah carried into Egypt by the Jews, and prophesies there.....	587
3419	Obadiah prophesies.....	585
3424	Nebuchadnezzar sets up a golden idol. The three Hebrew youths preserved in the fiery furnace, Dan. iii.....	580
3466	Belshazzar's impious feast; at which Babylon is taken by Cyrus the Persian, and the kingdom transferred to his uncle Darius the Mede, and the king slain, Dan. v. Thus the Assyrian, or first *universal* empire ended, Dan. ii. 36. 38. vii. 5.	538
3468	Cyrus succeeds Darius to the throne, and issues	

A.M.		B.C.
	an edict for the release of the Jewish captives, and the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem, delivering up at the same the sacred vessels, Ezra i. Isa. xlv. 1.	536
3484	Haggai and Zachariah prophesy, Ezra v.	520
3488	Esther, a Jewish captive, married by Ahasuerus, Est. i. ii.	516
3489	The second temple at Jerusalem finished and dedicated, Ezra vi.	515
3537	Ezra sent to Jerusalem to regulate the Jewish state, and to reform religion, Ezra vii.	467
3550	Nehemiah obtains leave to rebuild Jerusalem, Neh. ii.	454
3563	Nehemiah returns to king Artaxerxes, Neh. v. 14	441
3565	Nehemiah goes again to Jerusalem, and completes a reformation of religion among the people. Ezra revises those books of the Old Testament which had been written, and compiles the books of Chronicles, Neh. v. 14. viii. xiii. 6.	439
3566	Malachi prophesies; the last of the Old Testament writers.	438
3604	The Old Testament history closes about this time	400
3672	Alexander the Great, having entered Asia, visits Jerusalem, reverences Jaddua the high priest, and favours the Jews.	332
3674	Alexander overthrows the Medo-Persian, the *second universal* empire, slays Darius, and sets up the Macedonian or Grecian empire, Dan. ii. 39. vii. 6. xi. 1. 3.	330
3720	The Old Testament translated into Greek about this time: the version called the *Septuagint.*	284
3837	The seven brethren and their mother martyred at Antioch, by order of Antiochus, king of Syria, 2 Maccab. vii.	167
3839	Judas Maccabeus recovers Jerusalem from the Syrians, and restores the worship of God.	165
3939	The Romans conquer Syria, terminate the *third*, or *Grecian empire*, and establish their own, the *fourth universal empire*, Dan. ii. 40. 43.	65
3941	Judea made a Roman province.	63

A.M.		A.D.
3999	John the Baptist born, six months before Jesus Christ, Luke i.....	5
4000	Jesus Christ born; being four years earlier than the common reckoning, Anno Domini.....	4

PERIOD OR AGE VIII.

From the birth of Jesus Christ to the end of the first century.

4012	Jesus Christ hears and questions the Jewish doctors in the temple, he being about twelve years of age, Luke ii.....	8
4032	Pilate sent from Rome into Judea as governor.	28
4033	John the Baptist begins his ministry, Matt. iii.	29
4034	Jesus Christ baptized by John, Matt. iii.....	30
4037	Jesus Christ crucified, and rose from the dead, Matt. xxvii. xxviii.....	33
4039	Paul converted—Saul, his Jewish name, Acts ix.	35
4048	James beheaded by Herod: Peter liberated by an angel, Acts xii.....	44
4064	Paul sent a prisoner to Rome, Acts xxvi.—xxviii.	60
4069	Paul and, as is supposed, Peter also, suffered martyrdom at Rome. The Jewish war begins.	65
4071	The Roman general raises the siege of Jerusalem, by which an opportunity was afforded for the christians to retire to Pella beyond the Jordan, according to the admonition of Christ..	67
4074	Jerusalem besieged and taken, by Titus Vespasian, according to the predictions of Christ, when 1,100,000 perished, by famine, fire, sword, and crucifixion: 97,000 were made captives and sold as slaves, besides innumerable multitudes who perished in other parts of Judea.....	70
4075	Jerusalem & its temple razed to the foundations.	71
4099	John banished, by the emperor Domitian, to Patmos, where he writes his revelation.....	95
4101	John liberated from exile and writes his gospel.	97
4104	John dies, being about 100 years old. He was the last surviving apostle; and, as is believed, the only one of them who died a natural death.	100

ANALYSIS

OF THE

HISTORICAL BOOKS

OF THE

OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS.

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF THE HISTORICAL BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Names.	Authors.	Dates in years before Christ.
Genesis	Moses	From 4004 to 1635.
Job	———	2180 or 2180.
Exodus	———	From 1635 to 1490.
Leviticus	———	1490.
Numbers	———	From 1490 to 1451.
Deuteronomy	———	1451.
Joshua	Joshua	From 1451 to 1425.
Judges	Samuel	From 1425 to 1120.
Ruth	———	From 1241 to 1231.
1 Samuel 2 Samuel	Compiled by Samuel, Nathan Gad, and others	From 1171 to 1055. From 1055 to 1015.
Psalms	David and others	At various times. Those by David from 1060 to 1015.
Solomon's Song	Solomon	About 1010.
Proverbs	———	About 1000.
Ecclesiastes	———	About 977.
1 Kings 2 Kings	Nathan, Gad, Ahijah, Iddo, Isaiah & others	1 Kings from 1015 to 896. 2 Kings from 896 to 562.
1 Chronicles. 2 Chronicles.	Ezra and others	From 4004 to 536.
Ezra	Ezra	From 536 to 456.
Nehemiah	Nehemiah	From 455 to 420.
Esther	Ezra	From 521 to 495.

GENESIS.

i. ii. The creation of the world and the state of man in paradise.

iii. The transgression of Adam and Eve and their expulsion from paradise.

iv. v. The history of Adam and his descendants to the time of Noah.

vi. vii. The wickedness of mankind—Destruction of the world by the deluge—Preservation of Noah and his family.

viii. ix. Restoration of the world—God's covenant of safety with Noah—Noah's prophecy.

x. The repeopling of the world by his descendants.

xi. * The building of Babel —Confusion of Tongues—Dispersion of mankind.

xii.—xxv. The history of Abraham and his family.

xxvi. xxvii. The history of Isaac and his family.

xxviii.—xxxvi. The history of Jacob and his family.

xxxvii.—xl. The history of Joseph and his brethren.

xli.—l. The history of Joseph's prosperity in Egypt.

EXODUS.

i. The oppression of the Israelites in Egypt.

ii. iii. The birth and education of Moses—his life—his calling to be the deliverer of Israel.

iv.—xi. The mission of Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh —the stubbornness of Pharaoh—The plagues of Egypt.

xii. xiii. The institution of the passover and deliverance of the Israelites.

xiv. xv. The miraculous passage of the Red Sea, and destruction of the Egyptian army.

xvi.—xviii. Miraculous interpositions on behalf of Israel.

xix.—xxxi. The giving of the law to Moses from Mount Sinai.

xxxii. xxxiii. The idolatry of Israel and its consequences.

xxxiv.—xl. The renewal of the tables and erection of the tabernacle.

* In point of time chap. xi. precedes chap. x.

LEVITICUS.

i.—vii. Laws concerning sacrifices.

viii.—x. Laws and ceremonies concerning the priesthood.

xi.—xxii. Laws concerning ceremonials and ceremonial purifications.

xxiii.—xxvii. Laws concerning sacred festivals, tithes, offerings, &c.

NUMBERS.

i.—iv. The numbering of the Israelites—the forming them into tribes and companies—The offices of the Levites in the service of the tabernacle.

v.—x. The institution of various laws and ceremonies, civil and religious.

xi.—xxi. The murmuring and chastisements of the people in their journey from Sinai, the country of the Moabites.

xxii.—xxxvi. The encampment of the Israelites on the plains of Moab.

DEUTERONOMY.

i.—iv. A repetition of the history of the children of Israel.

v.—xxvi. A repetition of the moral, ceremonial, and judicial law.

xxvii.—xxx. The personal history of Moses.

JOSHUA.

i.—xi. The conquest of the land of Canaan.

xii.—xxii. The division of the country to the several tribes—the appointment of cities of refuge.

xxiii. xxiv. The assembling of the people—the dying appeal and exhortation of Joshua—his death and burial.

JUDGES.

i. ii. The state of the Israelites after the death of Joshua.

iii.—xvi. The oppression of the Israelites by their enemies on account of their sin—the deliverance wrought for them under thirteen successive judges.

xvii.—xxi. An account of the introduction of idolatry into Israel and the corruption of manners among them.

The period of these transactions belongs to the early part of the history of this book.

RUTH.

i. The expatriation of Elemeleck and his family on account of a famine.

ii. The return of Naomi to the land of Israel, accompanied by her daughter-in-law.

iii. iv. The marriage of Ruth with Boaz—The sacred genealogy from Judah to David.

I. SAMUEL.

i.—iv. The judicature and high priesthood of Eli—The birth of Samuel—his call to prophetical office—The degeneracy of Eli's sons—Death of Eli.

v.—xii. The history of Samuel.

xiii.—xxxi. The history of Saul.

II. SAMUEL.

i.—x. The prosperous and triumphant part of David's reign.

xi.—xix. His grievous sin—his consequent troubles—Rebellion and death of Absalom.

xx.—xxxiv. His restoration and re-establishment on the throne—his transgression in numbering the people—his punishment—his penitential intercession and sacrifice.

I. KINGS.

i.—xi. The prosperous reign of Solomon, in the lifetime of David—Solomon's fall into idolatry—his death.

xii.—xxii. The division of the people of Israel into two kingdoms, the kingdom of Judah and the kingdom of Israel.

II. KINGS.

i.—xvii. A contemporary history of the two kingdoms until the subversion of that of Israel.

xviii.—xxv. The history of the decline and fall of the kingdom of Judah.

I. & II. CHRONICLES.

i.—ix. Genealogical tables from Adam to the time of Ezra.

x.—xxix. 22. The histories of Saul and David, (corresponding with the latter part of the first book of Samuel, and the whole of the second book.)

xxix.—23.—30. 2 Chron. i.—ix. The reign of Solomon, (corresponding with the first part of the book of kings.)

x.—xxxvi. The history of the kingdom of Judah under its several kings, from the succession of the ten tribes to the Babylonish captivity, (corresponding with the latter part of the first, and the whole of the second book of kings.)

EZRA.

i.—vi. The return of the Jews to Judea under Zerubbabel, to the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem.

vii.—x. The arrival of Ezra in Jerusalem, and the reformation in religion and government.

This part of the history corresponds with the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah.

NEHEMIAH.

i. ii.—The departure of Nehemiah from Shushan, with a commission to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

iii.—vii. 4. The rebuilding of the walls, notwithstanding the opposition.

vii. 5.—xii. The first reformation of the ordinances effected by Nehemiah.

xiii. The second reformation among the people.

ESTHER.

i. ii. The advancement of Esther, a Jewish captive, to the throne of Persia—The detection of a plot against the life of the king by her uncle, Mordecai.

iii. The promotion of Haman to the office of prime minister—his malice against Mordecai, and his designs against the Jews.

iv.—x. The defeat of Haman's project, the elevation of Mordecai—institution of the feast of the Purim, in commemoration of the deliverance of the Jews.

A Table of the Order and Dates of the Books of the New Testament, and of the Places where they are supposed to have been written.

(Extracted from Horne's Introduction to the Scriptures.)

I. THE HISTORICAL BOOKS.

GOSPELS.	PLACES.	A.D.
Matthew (Hebrew)	Judea	37 or 38
——— (Greek)	———	61
Mark	Rome	between 60 and 63
Luke (Gospel)	Greece	63 or 64
—— (Acts of the Apostles)	———	63 or 64
John	Ephesus	97 or 98

II. THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL.

EPISTLES.	PLACES.	A.D.
1 Thessalonians	Corinth	52
2 Thessalonians	Corinth	52
Galatians	Corinth	At the close of or early in 52 53
1 Corinthians	Ephesus	56
Romans	Corinth	About the end of or the beginning of 57 58
2 Corinthians	Macedonia (perhaps from Philippi)	58
Ephesians	Rome	61
Philipians	Rome	Before the end of or the beginning of 62 63
Colossians	Rome	62
Philemon	Rome	About the end of or early in 62 63
Hebrews	Italy (perhaps from Rome)	About the end of or early in 62 63
1 Timothy	Macedonia	64
Titus	Macedonia	64
2 Timothy	Rome	65

III. THE CATHOLIC OR GENERAL EPISTLES.

EPISTLES.	PLACES.	A.D.
James	Judea	61
1 Peter	Rome	64
2 Peter	Rome	About the beginning of 65
1 John	Unknown perhaps Ephesus	About the end of or early in 68 69
2 & 3 John	Ephesus	About the end of or early in 68 69
Jude	Unknown	64 or 65

The Revelation of St. John	Ephesus	96 or 97

ST. MATTHEW.

i.—vi. 1—17. The genealogy of Christ.

v. 18—25. The birth of Christ.

ii. The adoration of the magi and slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem, and in its vicinity.

iii. The preaching of John the Baptist, and the baptism of Jesus Christ by him.

iv. 1—11. The temptation of Christ in the wilderness.

iv. 12—25. Christ goes into Galilee, calls Peter, Andrew, James, and John, and performs various miraculous cures.

v.—vii. The sermon on the mount.

viii. ix. A narrative of several miracles performed by Christ, and of the call of St. Matthew.

x. xi. 1. Christ's charge to his twelve apostles whom he sent forth to preach to the Jews.

xi. 2.—xvi. 1—12. Relates the manner in which the discourses and actions of Jesus Christ were received by various descriptions of men, and the effect produced by his discourses and miracles.

xvi. 13—xx. 1—16. Contains the discourses and actions of Christ, immediately concerning his disciples.

xx. 17—34. The discourses and miracles of Christ in his way to Jerusalem.

xxi. xxv. The entrance of Christ into Jerusalem.—The transactions at Jerusalem until his passion.—The description of the general judgment.

xxvi.—xxviii. Relates the sufferings, death, and resurrection of Christ.

ST. MARK.

i. 1—13. An account of the ministry of John the Baptist, and of the transactions from the baptism of Christ, to his entering on the more public part of his ministry.

i. 14.—x. The miracl

ST. MARK continued.

and discourses, &c. of Christ, to his going up to Jerusalem to the fourth and last passover.

xi.—xvi. The passion, death, and resurrection of Christ.

ST. LUKE.

i. ii. 1—40. The narrative of the birth of John the Baptist, and of Christ—together with all the circumstances that preceded, attended, and followed it.

ii. 41—52. The particulars relative to our Saviour's infancy and youth.

iii. The preaching of John, and the baptism of Jesus Christ, with his genealogy.

iv.—ix. 1—50. The discourses, miracles, and actions of Christ, during his ministry.

ix. 51—62. x.—xxiv. An account of our Saviour's last journey to Jerusalem, including every circumstance relative to his passion, death, resurrection, and ascension.

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i. Several particulars relative to John the Baptist, and the first act of Christ after his entrance upon his public ministry.

ii.—xii. The discourses and actions of Christ until his last appearance at Jerusalem.

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THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES continued.

ii.—vii. The first publication of Christianity, and the rise and progress of the mother church at Jerusalem, until the murder of Stephen.

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xvi.—xx. An account of the labours of Paul among the Gentiles, from whom he gathered many Christian churches.

xxi.—xxviii. Paul's journey to Jerusalem—his persecution by the Jews—his appeal to Cæsar, and being sent a prisoner to Rome.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDEX

OF PLACES MENTIONED IN THE

NEW TESTAMENT.

(Chiefly extracted from Horne's Introduction to the Scriptures.)

ACELDAMA. A place without the south wall of Jerusalem. It was called the Potters' field, Matt. xxvii. 7, 10. The Fullers' field, and the field of blood, Acts i. 19; Matt. xxvii. 7, 8.

ACHAIA. The southern part of Greece, of which Corinth was the capital. Achaia mentioned in Acts xix. 21, is Hellas, that is, Greece properly so called.

ADRAMYTIUM. A maritime town of Mysia in Asia Minor, Acts xxvi. 1, 2.

ADRIA. The Adriatic Sea, Acts xxvii. 27.

ALEXANDRIA. A celebrated city of Egypt, situated between the Mediterranean Sea and Lake Moeris.

AMPHIPOLIS. A city between Macedon and Thrace, Acts xviii. 1.

ANTIOCH. 1. The metropolis of Syria, where the Christians were first so called.

2. A city of Pisidia in Asia Minor, Acts xiii. 14.

ANTIPATRIS. A small town situated in the road from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, Acts xxiii. 31.

APPOLLONIA. A city of Macedonia, between Amphipolis and Thessalonica, Acts xvii. 1.

APPII FORUM. A small town on the celebrated Appian Way, about 40 miles from Rome.

ARABIA. A country of Asia, east of the Red Sea. It was divided into three, "Arabia Felix," "Arabia Petræa," and "Arabia Deserta."

AREOPAGUS, or "*The Hill of Mars*," where the supreme court at Athens was held.
ARIMATHEA. A small town of Judæa, about 36 miles from Jerusalem.
ASIA. In the New Testament means Asia Minor.
ASSOS. A maritime city of Mysia, Acts xx. 13, 14.
ATHENS. The metropolis of Attica and most celebrated city in Greece.
ATTALIA. A maritime city of Pamphylia, Acts xiv. 25.
AZOTUS. A city of Judæa, situated between Gaza and Jamnia, Acts viii. 40.

BABYLON. The capital of Babylonia or Chaldea, situated on the river Euphrates.
BEREA. A city of Macedonia, Acts xviii. 10.
BETHABARA. The place of the ford or passage, viz. of the Jordan, John i. 20.
BETHANY. 1. A town of Judæa, fifteen furlongs east from Jerusalem on the way to Jericho, John xi. 8.
2. A village on the eastern side of Jordan where John was baptized, John i. 28.
BETHLEHEM. A celebrated city of Judæa, the birthplace of our Saviour, about six miles from Jerusalem, Matt. ii. 1—5.
BETHPHAGE. A small village at the foot of the Mount of Olives, between Bethany and Jerusalem, Matt. xxi. 1.
BETHSAIDA. A city beyond Jordan, on the coast of the Sea of Tiberias, Matt. xi. 21; John i. 44.
BITHYNIA. A country of Asia Minor, 1 Pet. i. 1.

CÆSAREA. The metropolis of Palestine, Acts x. xxi. 8, xxiv.
CÆSAREA PHILIPPI. A town of Palestine.
CALVARY. A hill on the north side of Jerusalem, Matt. xxvii. 33.
CANA. A small town of Galilee, John iv. 47—51.
CAPERNAUM. A town of Galilee on the Lake of Gennesareth, Matt. xi. 23.

CAPPADOCIA. A kingdom of Asia Minor, Acts ii. 9.
CEDRON, or KEDRON. A brook near the river Jordan, John xviii. 1.
CENCHREA. A sea port on the east of the Isthmus of Corinth, Acts xviii. 18.
CHALDÆA. A country of Asia near the junction of the Tigris and Euphrates, the capital of which was Babylon.
CHIOS. An island in the Ægean Sea, between Lesbos and Samos, Acts xx. 13.
CHORAZIN. A small town on the coast of the Sea of Galilee, Matt. xi. 21; Luke x. 15.
CILICIA. A country of Asia Minor, Acts xxii. 3.
CLAUDA. An island near Crete, Acts xxvii. 16.
CNIDUS. A city and promontory of Caria, Acts. xxvii. 7.
COLOSSE. A city of Phrygia in Asia Minor.
COOS. An island in the Ægean Sea, Acts xxi. 1.
CORINTH. The metropolis of Achaia Proper.
CRETE. The largest island in the Mediterranean Sea, Acts xxvii. 7, 12, 13, 21.
CYPRUS. An island in the Mediterranean Sea, Acts xiii. 4.
CYRENE. The principal city of the province of Libya in Africa, Matt. xxvii. 32; Luke xxiii. 26.

DALMANUTHA. A town on the lake of Gennesareth.
DALMATIA. A province of Europe on the east of the Adriatic Sea, 2 Tim. iv. 10.
DAMASCUS. The capital city of Syria, the place of the miraculous conversion of St. Paul.
DECAPOLIS. A district containing ten cities of Palestine, Matt. iv. 25; Mark v. 20, vii. 31.
DERBE. A city of Lycaonia in Asia Minor, Acts xiv. 6.

EGYPT. A country of Africa.
EMMAUS. A village of Judæa about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, Luke xxiv.
ENON. A place or fountain in Judæa near to Jordan where John baptized.

EPHESUS. A city of Asia Minor celebrated for its temple, dedicated to Diana, Acts xix. 31.
EPHRAIM. A town of Palestine, John xi. 54.
EPIRUS. A country of southern Greece.
ETHIOPIA. A country of Africa, south of Egypt.

FAIR HAVENS. A sea port on the coast of Crete, Acts xxvii. 8.

GADARA, GADARINES. The metropolis of Peræa on the region beyond Jordan.
GALATIA. A province of Asia Minor.
GALILEE. The northern division of Palestine.
GAZA. A celebrated city of Palestine, about sixty miles from Jerusalem, Acts viii. 26.
GENNESARETH, Lake of, or Sea of Galilee, or Sea of Tiberias. A Lake of Palestine sixteen miles long and six broad.
GERGESA. A town near Gadara, on the lake of Gennesareth.
GERGESENES. A people of Gergesa, Matt. viii. 28.
GOLGOTHA. A part of Mount Calvary.
GOMORRAH. One of the four cities on the plain of Sodom destroyed by fire.

HIERAPOLIS. A city of Phrygia, Col. iv. 13.

ICONIUM. A city of Lycaonia, Acts xiv. 1—3.
IDUMÆA. A country north of Arabia, south of Judæa.
ILLYRICUM. A province lying to the north and northwest of Macedonia, along the eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea.
ITALY. An extensive region of Europe: Rome was its capital and the seat of almost universal empire in the time of the writers of the New Testament, Acts xviii. 2, xxvii. 1—6.

JERICHO. A city of Palestine, Luke xix. 2, x. 30—37.
JERUSALEM. The metropolis of Palestine.

JEWRY. Another name for Judæa.
JOPPA. A sea port of Palestine, Acts ix. x. xi.
JUDÆA. The southern part of Palestine, and often applied to the whole country.

LAODICEA. A city of Asia Minor.
LASÆA. A maritime city of Crete, Acts xxvii. 8.
LIBYA. Among the Greeks, it was used as another name for Africa, as it imports a part of it.
LYCAONIA. A province in Asia Minor, Acts xiv.
LYCIA. A country of Asia Minor.
LYDDA. A town of Judæa near Joppa, Acts ix. 32—38.
LYSTRA. A city of Lycaonia, Acts xiv. 10, 11, xvi. 1.

MACEDONIA. A province of Greece, Acts xvi. 9; 2 Cor. viii. ix.
MAGDALA. A city and territory on the western side of the Lake Gennesareth, Matt. xv. 39.
MEDIA. A vast region of Asia near Persia, Acts ii. 9.
MELITA, or MALTA. An island in the Mediterranean Sea, Acts xxviii. 1.
MESOPOTAMIA. A country situated between the rivers Euphrates and Tigris, extending from the Persian gulf to mount Taurus, Acts ii. 9.
MILETUS. A sea port of Asia Minor, and a city of Ionia, Acts xx. 17—35.
MILETUS. A sea port in Crete, 2 Tim. iv. 20.
MYRA. A city of Lycia near the sea, Acts xxvii. 5.
MYSIA. A country of Asia Minor, Acts xvi. 7, 8.

NAIN. A small city of Galilee, Luke vii. 11—15.
NAZARETH. A small city of lower Galilee, the place where our Saviour was educated, where he preached, and whence he was called a Nazarene.
NEAPOLIS. A town of Macedonia.
NEPTHALIM. A district in the north of Galilee.
NICOPOLIS. A city of Epirus, upon the Ambracian gulf, Tit. iii. 12.
NINEVEH. The capital of the Asyrian empire.

PAMPHYLIA. A province of Asia Minor, Acts xxvii. 5.
PAPHLAGONIA. A province of Asia Minor.
PAPHOS. The metropolis of the island of Cyprus, Acts xiii. 4—6.
PARTHIA. A country near to Persia, Acts ii. 9.
PATARA. A sea port in Lycia.
PATMOS. A small island in the Ægean Sea near Miletus.
PERGA. A city of Pamphylia, Acts xiii. 13.
PERGAMOS. The metropolis of Mysia.
PERSIA. A great empire in Asia.
PHILADELPHIA. A city of Lydia on the western coast of Asia Minor.
PHILIPPI. A city of Macedonia, Acts xvi. 9—40.
PHRYGIA. A province of Asia Minor, Col. ii. 1.
PISIDIA. A country of Asia Minor, Acts xiv. 24.
PONTUS. A province of Asia Minor.
PTOLEMAIS. A sea port and town on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea on the confines of upper and lower Galilee.
PUTEOLI. A maritime town of Campania in Italy, Acts xxviii. 13.

RAMA or RAMAH. A small town of Judæa.
RHEGIUM. A maritime city in Italy, opposite to Messina in Sicily, Acts xxviii. 13.
RHODES. An island and city in the Levant, Acts xxi. 1.
ROME. The capital of Italy and the Roman empire.

SALAMIS. The chief city of the island of Cyprus.
SALIM. A town in Samaria, John iii. 23.
SALMONE. A maritime city of the island of Crete, Acts xxvii. 7.
SAMARIA. The middle division of Palestine.
SAMARIA. The capital city of Samaria.
SAMOS. An island in the Mediterranean Sea, Acts xx. 15.
SAMOTHRACIA. An island in the Ægean Sea, Acts xvi. 11.
SARDIS. The metropolis of Lydia in Asia Minor.

SAREPTA. A city in the territory of Sidon, Luke iv. 26.
SARON. A town adjoining Lydda, Acts ix. 35.
SELUCIA. A sea port and town of Syria, Acts xiii. 4.
SIDON. A celebrated city of Palestine, Matt. xv. 21—28.
SILOAM. A fountain near Jerusalem.
SINAI. A mountain in Arabia near mount Horeb, Acts vii. 30.
SMYRNA. A city of Asia Minor.
SPAIN. An extensive region of Europe.
SYRACUSE. A city on the island of Sicily, Acts xxviii. 12.
SYCHAR. A city of Samaria, John iv. 5.
SYRIA. A country of Asia.
SYRO-PHENICIA. Phenicia properly so called of which Sidon was the capital, Matt. xv. 22, 24.

TABOR. A mountain of Palestine.
TARSUS. The capital of Cilicia, Acts xxi. 39.
THESSALONICA. A sea port and city of Macedonia.
THREE TAVERNS. A village on the Appian way to Rome, Acts xxviii. 15.
THYATIRA. A city of Asia Minor, in the road from Pergamos to Sardis.
TIBERIAS. The capital of Galilee.
TRACHONITIS. A district of Babylon.
TROAS. A maritime city of Mysia. The adjoining country was also called Troas, Acts xvi. 8, 11.
TROGYLLIUM. A promontory at the foot of mount Mycale, Acts xx. 15.
TYRE. A celebrated city and sea port of Phenicia.

SYMBOLICAL INDEX

OF THE

BIBLE.

(Chiefly extracted from Horne's Introduction to the Scriptures.)

ABOMINATIONS. 1. Sin in general, Is. lxvi. 3; Ezek. xvi. 50, 51.
2. An idol, Is. xliv. 19; 2 Kings xxiii. 13.
3. Idolatrous rites and ceremonies of the church of Rome, Rev. xvii. 4.

ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION. The idolatrous ensigns of the Roman army, Matt. xxiv. 15.

ACCURSED. 1. Devoted to destruction, Josh. vi. 17.
2. Accursed from Christ, Rom. ix. 3.

ADULTRESS, OR HARLOT. An apostate church or city; particularly the Jewish church and people, Is. i. 21; Rev. xvii.. 5.

ADULTEROUS GENERATION. A faithless and impious generation, Matt. xii. 39, xvi. 4; Mark viii. 38.

ADULTERY. Idolatry and apostacy, Jer. iii. 8, 9; Rev. ii. 22.

ANGELS. 1. Angel of the Lord; Jesus Christ, Zech. i. 12.
2. Those intellectual and immaterial beings whom the Almighty employs as the ministers of his providence or of his judgments, Rev. xv. 8; xvi. i; xxii. 8.
3. Fallen spirits, Matt. xxv. 41.

ARM. 1. The omnipotence of God, Jer. xxvii. 5; xxxii. 17.
2. The power, strength, and miracles of Christ, Is. liii. 1; John xii. 38.
3. Gracious influence of God on mankind, Is. lii. 10.

ARMOUR. Spiritual graces, Rom. xiii. 12; Ephes. vi. 11.

ARROWS. 1. Calamities and judgments of God, Job vi. 4.
2. Slanderous words, Ps. lxiv. 3.
3. Children, Ps. cxxvii. 4, 5.

BABES. 1. Foolish and inexperienced princes, Is. iii. 4.
2. Young or feeble Christians, 1 Cor. iii. 1; Heb. v. 13.
BABYLON. Papal Rome, Rev. xiv. 8, xvii. xviii.
BALAAM. A defection from true religion, 2 Pet. ii. 15; Jude 11; Rev. ii. 14.
BEAST. 1. A heathen kingdom or power of the earth, Dan. vii. 17.
2. The papal antichrist, Rev. xiii. 2. 12, xvii. 3. 7. 8.
BITTER, BITTERNESS. Affliction, misery, and servitude, Exod. i. 14; Jer. ix. 15; Acts viii. 23.
BLACK, BLACKNESS. Afflictions, disasters and anguish, Jer. xiv. 2; Joel ii. 6.
BLASPHEMY. Idolatry, Rev. xiii. 1. 5. 6; xvii. 3.
BLINDNESS. Ignorance of divine doctrine, Is. xxix. 18; Rom. xi. 25; Ephes. iv. 18.
BLOOD. 1. Slaughter and mortality, Is. xxxiv. 3.
2. Our natural descent from one common family, Acts xvii. 26.
3. Symbol of the atonement by Christ, Matt. xxvi. 28; Heb. xiii. 20; Rom. v. 9.
BODY. The church with its different members, 1 Cor. xii. 20—27.
BOOK OF LIFE. The heavenly register of the kingdom of God, Rev. iii. 5; Matt. iii. 16.
BOW. 1. Strength, Job xxix. 10.
2. Victory, Rev. vi. 2.
BOWELS. Pity, compassion, Luke i. 78; Phil. ii. 1.
BRANCH. Christ, Is. xi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 5; Zech. iii. 8.
BRASS. Strength, Ps. cvii. 16; Is. xlv. 2; Jer. i. 13, xv. 20.
BREAD OR FOOD. 1. Divine doctrine, Deut. viii. 3; Is. lv. 2; Matt. iv. 4.
2. Christian fellowship, 1 Cor. x. 17.
BRIDE. The church of Christ, Rev. xxi. 9.

BRIDEGROOM. The husband of the church, John iii. 29; Rev. xxi. 9.

BRIMSTONE. 1. Perpetual desolations, Job xviii. 15; Is. xxxiv. 9.
2. Emblem of torment, Rev. xiv. 10.
3. Pernicious doctrines, Rev. ix. 17.

BULLS. Violent men, Ps. xxii. 12.

CEDARS. 1. Eminent men, Zech. xi. 2.
2. Nobility, military chiefs, Ezek. xvii. 4.
3. Cedars of Lebanon; kings, princes, and nobles of Judah, Is. ii. 13.

CHAFF. Worthless men, Ps. i. 4; Matt. iii. 12.

CHAIN. Affliction, Lam. iii. 7.

CIRCUMCISION. An engagement like that of baptism, to renounce the flesh and circumcise the heart, Deut. x. 16, xxx. 6; Rom. ii. 29.

CLAY IN THE HANDS OF THE POTTER. Man in the hands of his Creator, Is. lxiv. 8; Rom. ix. 21.

CLOUDS. Multitudes and armies, Jer. iv. 13; Is. lx. 8; Heb. xii. 1.

CROWN OF LIFE—OF GLORY. Immortality, felicity and glory of heaven, James i. 12; Rev. ii. 10.

CUP. 1. The blessings and favours of God, Ps. xxiii. 5.
2. Divine judgments, Is. li. 17.

CUP OF SALVATION. Thankful acknowledgment of divine mercies, Ps. cxvi. 13.

CUP OF BLESSING. Cup at the Lord's supper, in allusion to the paschal cup, 1 Cor. x. 16.

DARKNESS. 1. Sin and ignorance, Rom. xiii. 12.
2. Affliction, misery and adversity, Jer. xiii. 16.

DARKNESS OF THE SUN, MOON AND STARS. General darkness and deficiency in the government, Is. xiii. 10.

DAY.[a] 1. A year, Ezek. iv. 6; Rev. ii. 10, xi. 9, xii. 6.
2. An appointed time or season, Is. xxxiv. 8.
3. A state of hope and knowledge, 1 Thess. v. 5.

DEATH, *natural*. A separation of the soul from the body, Gen. xxv. 1.

DEATH, *moral.* Insensibility to the evil of sin, Ephes. ii. 2; Rev. iii. 1.

DEATH, *second.* Eternal banishment from God, Rev. ii. 11, xx. 14.

DEATH, *evangelical.* Mortification of sinful affection, Rom. vi. 8; 1 Pet. ii. 24.

DEW. The power of Christ in the resurrection, and the blessing of heaven, Is. xxvi. 19.

DOGS. 1. The Gentiles, on account of the impurity of their lives, Matt. xv. 26.

2. Idle and false teachers of religion, Rev. xxii. 15; Phil. iii. 2; Is. lvi. 10.

DOOR. 1. The beginning of a new kind of government, Rev. iv. 1.

2. The free exercise and propagation of the gospel, 1 Cor. xvi. 9.

DRAGON. 1. A symbol of a king that is an enemy. In Ezek. xxix. 3, it means the king of Egypt; so also in Ps. lxxiv. 13.

2. Satan actuating his agents, Rev. xii. 9.

3. Any hurtful thing, Ps. xci. 13.

DRUNKENNESS. 1. Symbol of folly, Is. xxviii. 1—3.

2. Sensclessness—the effect of divine judgments, Is. xxix. 9, li. 21.

DUST AND ASHES. Human nature, Gen. iii. 19, xviii. 27.

EAGLE. 1. A king or kingdom, Ezek. xvii.

2. The Roman army, Matt. xxiv. 28.

3. Emblem of renewed strength, Ps. ciii. 3; Is. xl. 31.

EARTHEN VESSEL. The human body, 2 Cor. iv. 7.

EARTHQUAKES. Political revolutions, Rev. vi. 12; Hag. ii. 6, 7; Heb. xii. 26; Joel ii. 10.

EGYPT. A mystical name of wickedness, Rev. xi. 8.

ELDERS. The *twenty-four*—patriarchal believers, Rev. iv. 10; Heb. xi. 2.

EYES. 1. As applied to the Almighty, denote (first) his *infinite* knowledge, Prov. xv. 3; Ps. xi. 4. Second. *His* watchful providence, Ps. xxxii. 8, xxxiv. 15.

2. As applied to Jesus Christ, they denote his omnipresence, Rev. ii. 23, v. 6; Heb. iv. 13.
3. As applied to men, they denote first, the understanding,—the eye of the soul, Ps. cxix. 18; Ephes. i. 18: second, a friendly counsellor, Job xxix. 15: third, the whole man, Rev. i. 7: fourth, human designs, Deut. xxviii. 54—58.

FACE. 1. The favour of God, Ps. xxxi. 16; Dan. ix. 17.
2. The infidel profaneness of impenitent men, Jer. v. 3.
FAMILY. The church of God, Ephes. iii. 15.
FAT. 1. The most excellent of every thing, Ps. lxxxi. 16, cxlvii. 14.
2. Riches, Ps. xxii. 29; Jer. v. 28.
FATHER. God—whose children we all are by creation and adoption, Matt. i. 6, ii. 10; Jer. xxxi. 9; Rom. viii. 15, 16; Ephes. i. 5.
FIELD. The world, Matt. xiii. 38.
FIRE. 1. Destructive calamity, Is. xlii. 25, lxvi. 15.
2. Burning fire—the wrath of God, Ezek. xxii. 31.
3. Afflictions or persecution, Is. xxiv. 15.
4. Coals of fire, denoting God's anger, Ps. xviii. 8. 12. 13.
FLESH. 1. Riches, Is. xvii. 4.
2. Mortal man, Is. xl. 6.
3. Human virtues, Phil. iii. 3, 4.
FOREHEAD. Public profession of religion, Rev. vii. 3, xiii. 16.
FOX. A cunning, deceitful person, Luke xiii. 32; Ezek. xiii. 4.
FRUIT. 1. The consequences of an action, Prov. i. 31.
2. Good works, Ps. i. 3; Matt. iii. 8.
FURNACE. Place of affliction. Deut. iv. 20; Jer. ix. 7.

GARMENTS. Souls of men, Rev. iii. 4.
GARMENTS, *white*—emblems of purity and joy, Is. lii. 1, lxi. 10; Rev. iii. 4, 5, xix. 8.
GATES. Symbol of security, Ps. cxlvii. 13.
GATES OF THE DAUGHTER OF SION. The ordinances of divine worship, Ps. ix. 14.

GATES OF DEATH. Imminent danger, Ps. ix. 13; Job xxxviii. 17.
GOLD. Graces of the Holy Spirit, Rev. iii. 18.
GRAPES. Fruits of righteousness, Is. v. 2.
GRAPES, *wild*. Sinful tempers and manners, Is. v. 2.
GRASS. Mankind in general, Is. xl. 6, 7.
GROUND. The heart of man, Luke viii. 15.

HAIL. The incursions of violent enemies, Is. xxviii. 2, xxxii. 19; Rev. viii. 7.
HAND, *right*. Protection and favour, Ps. xviii. 35, lxxiii. 23.
HAND, LAYING ON OF THE. Communication of blessings and authority, Gen. xlviii. 20; Numb. xxvii. 18.
HAND OF GOD ON A PROPHET. Influence of the Holy Spirit, Ezek. viii. 1.
HARVEST. Extreme judgment, Joel iii. 13; or end of the world, Matt. xiii. 39.
HEAD. 1. The understanding, or governing principle in man, Is. i. 5; Dan. ii. 38.
2. Chief of a people, Mic. iii. 1. 9, 11.
3. The metropolis of a country, Is. vii. 8, 9.
HEAVENS. 1. The powerful providence of God, Dan. iv. 26.
2. God, Matt. xxi. 25; Luke xv. 18.
3. Political or ecclesiastical governments, Is. xiii. 13; Hag. ii. 2—21.
4. The visible church, Rev. xii. 7—9.
HELL. 1. The general receptacle of departed souls, Rev. i. 18; Ps. xvi. 10.
2. The place of eternal torment for the impenitent, Ps. ix. 17; Matt. x. 28, xxiii. 33.
HORN. 1. Strength, Rev. v. 1.
2. Divine protection, Ps. xviii. 2; Amos iii. 14; Luke i. 69.
3. Regal power, Jer. xlviii. 25; Zeck. i. 18—21; Dan. vii. 20—22.
HORSE. Emblem of conquest, Joel fi. 4; Hab. i. 8; Jer. iv. 13.

HOUSE. 1. Church of God, Is. ii. 2; 1 Tim. iii. 15; Heb. iii. 6.
2. Human body, 2 Cor. v. 1.

HUNGER AND THIRST. 1. Natural desires after happiness, Prov. xix. 15; Is. lv. 1; Rev. xxii. 17.
2. Spiritual desires, Amos viii. 11; Matt. v. 6; Luke i. 53.

IDOLATRY. Covetousness, Col. iii. 5; any thing too much and sinfully indulged in, 1 John v. 21.

IMAGE OF GOLD, SILVER, BRASS, AND IRON. The four great monarchies or kingdoms of the world, Dan. ii. 31—45.

INCENSE. Devotional exercises, Ps. cxli. 2; Rev. v. 8.

INFIRMITIES. 1. Bodily weaknesses, Matt. viii. 17; Is. liii. 4.
2. Spiritual weaknesses, Rom. viii. 26.

JERUSALEM. 1. Church of God, Ps. cxx. 6; Is. lxvi. 13.
2. Heavenly glory, Heb. xii. 22; Rev. iii. 12; Gal. iv. 24—26.

KEYS. 1. Power and authority, Rev. i. 18; Is. xxii.
2. Commission of the gospel ministry, Matt. xvi. 19.
3. Means of scriptural knowledge, Luke xi. 52.

LABOURERS. Gospel ministers, Matt. ix. 37, 38; 1 Cor. iii. 9.

LAMB. The Messiah—typified by the Paschal Lamb, Ex. xii. 11, xxix. 38—41.

LAMP. 1. A successor, 1 Kings xv. 4; Ps. cxxxii. 17.
2. Profession of religion, Matt. xxv. 3, 4.
3. Divine illumination and comfort, 2 Sam. xxii. 29.
4. A christian church, Rev. i. 12. 20.

LEAVEN. Corrupt principles and practices, Matt. xvi. 6; 1 Cor. v. 6. 8.

LEAVES. Words, the service of the lips, Ps. i. 3.

LEOPARD. 1. A subtle, rapacious enemy, Dan. vii. 6; Is. xi. 6.
2. Antichristian power, Rev. xiii. 2.

LIFE. 1. Immortality, Ps. xvi. 11, xxxvi. 19.
2. The doctrine of the gospel, John vi. 63.
3. Christ—the source of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal, John i. 4, xi. 25, xiv. 6; Col. iii. 4.
LIGHT. 1. Joy, comfort, and felicity, Esth. viii. 16; Ps. cxii. 4.
2. Evangelical knowledge and holiness, Is. viii. 20; Ephes. v. 8; 1 John i. 7.
LION. 1. Emblem of fortitude and strength, Gen. xlix. 9.
2. A title of Christ, Rev. v. 5.
LOCUSTS. Antichristian corrupters of the gospel, Rev. ix. 3.

MAMMON *of unrighteousness.* Worldly riches, Luke xvi. 9.
MANNA. 1. The bread of life, John vi. 26—50.
2. The felicities of immortality, Rev. ii. 17.
MOON. 1. The church, Sol. Song, vi. 10.
2. The Mosaic dispensation, Rev. xii. 1.
MOUNTAIN. 1. A kingdom, state, republic, or city, Is. ii. 12—14; Zech. iv. 7.
2. The kingdom of Christ's church, Is. ii. 2, xi. 9; Dan. ii. 35.
MYSTERY. A thing or doctrine unknown until revealed, Rom. xvi. 25; 1 Cor. ii. 7; Col. i. 26; Rev. i. 20.

NAKED. Destitute of the garment of holiness, Rev. iii. 17.
NAMES. Persons, Acts i. 15; Rev. iii. 4.
NIGHT. Intellectual darkness; adversity, Rev. xxi. 25.

OAKS. Princes, Is. ii. 13.
OLIVE, *wild.* Man in a state of nature, Rom. xi. 24.
OLIVE, *cultivated.* The church of Christ, Rom. xi. 17.

PALMS. Symbols of joy after a victory, Rev. vii. 9.
PARADISE. The invisible residence of the blessed, Luke xxiii. 43; Rev. ii. 7.
PASSOVER. Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. v. 7.
PHYSICIAN. Jesus Christ, Matt. ix. 12.

PILLAR. 1. Chief support of a family, city, or state, Gal. ii. 9.
2. A monument of grace in the temple of glory, Rev. iii. 12.
POISON. Lies, error and delusion, Ps. cxl. 3; Rom. iii. 13.
POWER. Dignity, privilege, prerogative, John i. 12.

RAIN. 1. Emblem of the divine goodness, Is. xliv. 3.
2. Pure and heavenly doctrine, Deut. xxxii. 2.
REAPERS. Angels, Matt. xiii. 39.
RIVER. 1. The irruption of an invading army, Is. lix. 19; Jer. xlvi. 7, 8.
2. An emblem of exuberant blessings, Job xxix. 6; Ps. xxxvi. 8.
3. Overflowings of divine love and grace, Rev. xxii. 1; Ezek. xlvii.
ROCK. 1. A defence, or place of refuge, Ps. xviii. 2; Is. xvii. 10.
2. The founder of a nation, Is. li. 1.
3. An unfruitful hearer, Luke viii. 6.
4. Rock giving water to the Israelites, 1 Cor. x. 4.
ROD. 1. Powerful authority, Ps. ii. 9.
2. Divine faithfulness. Ps. xxiii. 4.

SALT. 1. The principles and virtues of christians, Matt. v. 13.
2. Wisdom of christian prudence, Col. iv. 6.
SEAL, SEALED. 1. Symbol of security, Sol. Song iv. 12.
2. Symbol of secrecy, Is. xxix. 11.
3. Restraint, Job ix, xxxvii. 7.
4. Token of special commission, John vi. 27.
5. Emblem of peculiar interest, Ephes. i. 13, iv. 30; Rev. vii. 2—4.
SEED. The word of God, Luke viii. 11.
SERPENT. Satan, the enemy of souls, Rev. xii. 9.
SHEEP. The disciples of Christ, Zech. xiii. 7; John x. 11—16; 1 Pet. ii. 25.
SHIELD. Faith in the divine promises, Ephes. vi. 16.
SHOES. The preparation of the gospel of peace, Ephes. vi. 15.

SLEEP. Death, Dan. xii. 2.
SODOM AND GOMORRAH. Any apostate city, or the wicked world at large, Is. i. 10.
SORES. Spiritual maladies, Is. i. 6, liii. 5.
SOWER. A preacher of the word, Matt. xiii. 3.
STAR. 1. A ruler or conqueror, Numb. xxiv. 17.
2. Rulers of the church, Rev. i. 20.
3. Glorified saints, 1 Cor. xv. 41.
4. Apostate teachers, Jude 13.
STONE. 1. Jesus Christ, Ps. cxviii. 22; Is. xxviii. 16; Matt. xxi. 42.
2. A true believer, 1 Pet. ii. 5.
SUN. 1. The Lord God, Ps. lxxxiv. 11.
2. Jesus Christ, Mal. iv. 2.
SUN AND MOON. States, civil and ecclesiastical, Joel ii. 31; Acts ii. 20.
SWINE. Wicked and infidel persons, Matt. vii. 6.
SWORD. 1. Symbol of destruction, Deut. xxxii. 41, 42.
2. The word of God, Ephes. vi. 17.

TABERNACLE. The human body, 2 Cor. v. 1; 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.
TALENTS. The gifts of God bestowed on man, Matt. xxv. 15.
TARES. Wicked infidels, Matt. xiii. 38.
TEETH. Symbols of cruelty, Prov. xxx. 14.
THORNS. 1. The cares, riches, and pleasures of life, Luke viii. 14.
2. Wicked and perverse persons, Ez. ii. 6.
THRONE. 1, Kingdom, government, Gen. xli. 4; 2 Sam. vii. 12. 16.
2. An order of angels, Col. 1. 16.
THUNDER. The voice of God, Ps. xxix. 3.
TOWERS. Protectors, Is. ii. 12. 15.
TRAVAIL. Anguish and misery, Jer. iv. 31, xiii. 21; Mark xiii. 8.
TREE OF LIFE. Immortality, Rev. ii. 7, xxii. 2—14.
TREES. Good or bad men, Ps. i. 3; Matt. iii. 10.

VINE. 1. The Jewish church, Ps. lxxx. 8; Jer. ii. 21.
2. Christ the head of the church, John xv. 1.
VINEYARD. The church of Israel, Is. v. 1—6; Jer. xii. 10.
VIPERS. Decendants of wicked parents, Matt. iii. 7, xii. 34.
VOICE OF THE BRIDEGROOM. Nuptial festivals, invitations of the Saviour, Jer. xvi. 9; John iii. 29.

WALK. The habit of life.
To WALK AFTER THE FLESH. To be guided by sensual appetites, Rom. viii. 1.
To WALK AFTER THE SPIRIT. To follow the motions of the Holy Spirit, and the counsels of the Word of God, Gen. v. 24, vi. 9.
To WALK WITH GOD. To live in secret communion with God; acting as in his sight to please and glorify him, Gen. v. 24, vi. 9.
WATER. 1. The grace of the Holy Spirit, Is. xliv. 3; John iii. 5.
2. Living water, the word of the gospel, John iv. 10.
WATERS. 1. Troubles and afflictions, Ps. lxix. 1.
2. Multitude of people, Is. viii. 7.
3. The blessings of the gospel, Is. lv. 1.
WEEK. Seven years, Dan. ix. 24.
WHEAT. Good seed, the children of the kingdom, Matt. xiii. 38.
WILDERNESS. 1. General desolation, Is. xxvii, 10; Jer xxii. 6.
2. This world of trial, 1 Cor. x. 5, 6; Is. xli. 18.
WIND. 1. The operations of the Holy Spirit, John iii. 8.
2. Divine judgments, Is. xxvii. 8.
3. Desolation, Jer. li. 1, iv. 11, 12.
WINE. 1. Temporal blessings, Hos. ii. 8; Ps. iv. 7.
2. Gospel provision, Is. xxv. 6, lv. 1.
3. Divine indignation, Ps. lxxv. 8; Rev. xvi. 19.
WINGS. Protection, Ps. xvii. 8, xxxvi. 7, xci. 4.
WOLF, WOLVES. 1. Fierce irreligious men, Is. xi. 6, lxv. 25.
2. Bitter persecutors, Luke x. 3.

3. Avaricious men; professedly christian ministers, John x. 12; Acts xx. 29.

WOMAN. 1. A state or city, Ez. xxiii. 2. 3.
2. The true church of Christ, Rev. xii. 1.
3. The antichristian church, Rev. xvii. 3.

YOKE. 1. Oppressive bondage, Deut. xxviii. 48.
2. Punishments for sin, Lam. i. 14.
3. Painful, religious rites, Acts xv. 10; Gal. v. 1.
4. Moral restraints, Lam. iii. 27.